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TWENTY FIVE

SERMONS

Preached upon several

Subjects and Occasions.

To which is annex'd, A short

CHARACTER

Of the Right Reverend Father in God,

Dr. *GEORGE HOOPER,*

Late BISHOP of

BATH and WELLS.

By *THOMAS CONER, D. D.*

Prebendary of *Wells*, Vicar of *Over-Stowey*,
and Rector of *Ghedzoy* in *Somersetshire*.

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THE
PREFACE.

WE live in an Age so addicted to *Scribbling*, and abundant in *Sermons*, that it may be thought superfluous and impertinent to encrease the Number of Books, and must pass for a Piece of needless Vanity and Presumption in a Country-Parson to appear in Print.

Writing seems to be the Prerogative of some Stations, and the inferior Part of the Church should act only as Deputies and *Licentiates* under their *Dignify'd* Superiors. A Number of Titles in the Frontispiece of a Book is apt to amuse the World, and spur on the Curiosity of the Learned: But the Obscurity of an Author creates a Neglect or Coldness in the Reader, and the Want of Preferment is a Bar to the Acceptance of his Labours.

The P R E F A C E.

For these, amongst other Reasons, it is observable, with what Caution and Diffidence a young Writer enters upon the Stage ; covetous of Praise, and fearful of Censure ; flattering the Rich and the Noble, and truckling to the Vulgar and Illiterate : He dreads the *Lashes* of *Critics* on the one hand, and the *Insults* of *Rakes* on the other ; and therefore bespeaks the Favour of the *Gentle Reader* with all humble Deference and good Manners, *Prefacing* his Undertaking with the Usefulness and Piety of his Designs, his own Care and Labour in Compiling the present Work, and the Importunity of his Friends for the Publication of it.

Whatever Claim I may have to any of these Pleas and Excuses, I shall make Use of none of them at present ; but without producing any Vouchers, or mentioning any great Names, shall make this frank and open Declaration to the World, that it was the unexpected Success which *one* of these *Sermons* met with, which induc'd me to print the following *Volume*.

If

The PREFACE.

If the Reader shall be in as good an Humour now, as he was for some Years past, I shall be very thankful for his Candor, and the Bookseller will be more oblig'd to him for his Custom.

I can only say for myself, that I have made that Sermon the Standard of my Writing, which was so graciously receiv'd by the *University of Oxford*; and in the Choice of other Subjects, and the Method of handling them, I have endeavour'd to go out of the Common Road, and to raise some Observations, not so frequently mentioned by such of our Divines, as have treated upon the same Texts of Scripture.

The Reader will here find several Historical Descriptions of dead Persons, and some free Reflections upon those Princes and great Men of *Babylon* and *Judea*, whom the Holy Ghost has branded with Infamy, and left upon Record, for the most detestable Monsters of Wickedness and Barbarity. These Persons I thought the proper Subjects for Satyr, and

The PREFACE.

I was confident that the severest Treatment of their Vices could be justified from the Writings of the Prophets, and the Practice of our Saviour himself. But if any one shall be so dexterous, as to break Periods, and dismember Sentences; or so malicious, as to draw Parallels between the *Living* and the *Dead*, and to stretch the Proceedings of an *Arbitrary* and *Tyrannical*, to the Administrations of a *Free* and *Mix'd* Government; it is he is Criminal who makes the Application, and not the Author who never intended any.

The last Thing I am to account for, is a short *Character* at the End of these Sermons, which is now own'd and publish'd by me, purely at the Request and Importunity of the Book-seller: He, perhaps, seeing it so often printed in the public Papers, might hope it would quicken the Sale of these Discourses; and was willing to pass a Complement upon me, whilst he design'd a real Advantage to himself.

The

The PREFACE.

The Reader will soon perceive, by comparing the Date of my Letter with the Time of Bishop *Hooper's* Death, that the *Character* was an hasty Composition; and any one who farther considers the numerous and eminent Virtues of the *Deceased*, must conclude it Imperfect. It was drawn up in an Heat, and confin'd to the Length of an Initial Letter in a *News-Paper*. As it was then printed (with the Alteration only of a Word or Two) it is now presented to the Public; the Subject being too great to be revis'd upon cold Blood, and a second Attempt too daring for an unskilful Pen.

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And there came a certain poor Widow, and she threw in two Mites which make a Farthing.

And he called unto him his Disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor Widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the Treasury.

For all they did cast in of their Abundance: But she of her Want did cast in all that she had, even all her Living.

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Luke vii. 33, 34, 35. *John the Baptist came neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine; and ye say, He hath a Devil. The Son of Man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous Man, and a Wine-bibber; a Friend of Publicans and Sinners. But Wisdom is justified of all her Children.*

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1 Sam. xvi. 7. *But the Lord said unto Samuel, look not on his Countenance, or on the Height of his Stature, because I have refused him: For the Lord seeth not as Man seeth; for Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart.*

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The Unreasonableness of Censure.

Matt. vii. 3, 4, 5. *And why beholdest thou the Mote that is in thy Brother's Eye, but considerest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye?*

Or how wilt thou say to thy Brother, let me pull out the Mote out of thine Eye; and behold a Beam is in thine own Eye.

Thou Hypocrite, first cast out the Beam out of thine own Eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the Mote out of thy Brother's Eye.

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Honors

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SERMON XXV. The Unprofitableness of Conscience.
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Prayers. In Two Parts. 8vo.

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Honesty

*Honesty and Plain-Dealing an usual
Bar to Honour and Preferment.*

A.

SERMON

Preached at St. MART's

Before the

University of OXFORD,

Upon A&t-Sunday, July 9, 1710.

NUMB. xxiv. II.

*I thought to promote thee unto
great Honour; but lo, the Lord hath
kept thee back from Honour.*

THESE Words are the passion Sermon
nate and angry Resentment of I.
Balak King of Moab, against
Balaam the Sorcerer, for not
cursing the Persons, and blasting the De-
signs of the Children of Israel. For this
People coming up in a numerous Body
from

Sermon from Egypt, to take Possession of the

I. *Promis'd Land*, and to be invested with the Rights and Inheritance of their Forefathers, made a very formidable Figure in the Plains of Moab, and struck a Terror and Confusion into all the Neighbouring Countries. Balak and his Subjects

Numb.xxii.

1, 3.

v. 4.

were strangely surpriz'd at the Greatness of their Numbers, and the Extravagancy of their Demands, and *fore afraid, lest they should lick up all that was round about them, as the Ox licketh up the Grass of the Field.* For, such a potent and numerous Enemy, conducted from a foreign Country by a constant Series of Miracles, seem'd to be pick'd out for some great Design, and to be employ'd as the Instruments of Providence, to chastise the Rebellion of other Nations. This made the Moabites apprehensive of their own Danger, and fearful where the Storm would discharge it self. The Judgment was very visible and apparent, and the Sword of Justice hung threatening over their Heads: *Their Sons and Daughters* expected to be carried into a foreign Captivity, and Desolation and Famine were just approaching their native Country.

Under such a melancholy and dismal Prospect of Things, King Balak took all politic Measures of securing his Person, and defending his Dominions; and, forasmuch as he found himself inferior to the Enemy, and unable to dispute the Point fairly with them in the Field, he had recourse to indirect Practices, and endeav-

endeavour'd to supply by *Stratagem* what *Sermon*
was wanting in *Strength*; and by the Arts *I.*
of *Magick* and *Sorcery* to vanquish those, 
whom *Chariots* and *Armies* could make
no Impression upon.

Balaam, the Son of *Beor*, was the
Person pitch'd upon for this notable Piece
of Service, and the Depth of his *Lear-*
ning, and the Reputation of his *Sanctity*,
gave fresh Life to the Expectation of the
Mobbites, and buoy'd them up with the
Hopes of Success in the Undertaking.
But he, being over-rul'd by the *Spirit of*
Prophecy, and receiving Counter-orders
from the true God, was unable to find
any *Enchantment* against *Jacob*, or *Divina-*
tion against *Israel*; and so was obliged to *Num. xxiii,*
alter the Measures of his Proceedings, *23.*
and to turn the desired *Curse* into a
Blessing.

This so highly provok'd the Displea-
sure, and rais'd the Indignation of the
King, that he banish'd the *Enchanter* from
his Presence, and with a seeming Air
of Pride and Contempt told him, what
Honours and Preferments his Plain-deal-
ing and Sincerity had depriv'd him of.
I thought to promote thee unto great Honour;
but lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from
Honour.

These Words seem to be founded upon
that common Notion which some great
Men have, that they who *minister in holy*
Things, are tied up to no other Rules but
those of their *Interest*; that Religion is a
Craft, and Conscience a Jest; that Pray-

Sermon I. ers are an idle Amusement, and the Power of the Keys entirely at the Service of the Prince.

I shall therefore beg your Leave to let *Balaam* represent that Order of Men, which the King thought him no inconsiderable Member of; and that you would not at present load his Memory with too much Infamy and Disgrace, nor sink his Character below the Opinion which the Court had of it. For tho' he was misguided in the Object of his Worship, and took wrong Measures in his Applications to the Deity; yet his Office was esteem'd sacred by the Heathens, and his Reputation was great in his Country; his Person was rever'd by all, and his present Conduct was to be particularly applauded by those, who were under the same unfortunate Mistakes with himself. How justly soever the Worshippers of the true God may blame the Superstition of the Sorcerer, and reflect upon the Madness of the Prophet; yet *Balak* being under the Prepossessions of a false Religion, and the Guidance of an erroneous Conscience, could not but have a great Veneration both for the Art and Person of *Balaam*.

Upon this Supposition therefore (namely the Opinion of *Balaam's* being a Prophet, and the Respect which was thought due to his Function,) I shall treat of that rough and haughty Answer, which *Balak* gave him for not cursing his Enemies. I thought to promote thee unto great Honour; but

but lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from Sermon Honour.

I.

These Words, (as appears by the Circumstances of the foregoing Story, and the Remarks I have made upon the Context) do represent to us that extravagant Notion of *Power*, which *Balak* as a *King*, thought himself invested with, to command the Service of *Balaam*, (whom he respected as a true *Prophet*) to do a Thing *illegal* in it self, and *inconsistent* with his *Office*, upon a Prospect of that Honour and Preferment, which he was in a Capacity to oblige him with.

This remarkable Transaction between the *King* and the *Prophet*, will furnish me with these following Observations, for the Subject of my ensuing Discourse.

FIRST, That the Generality of *Superiors*, by a Stretch of their Authority, are willing to demand illegal and unwarrantable Things from *Ecclesiastical Persons*.

SECONDLY, That the Method and Artifice, by which they think to prevail over mercenary Men, is the specious Offer of Preferment and Honour.

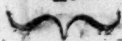
THIRDLY, That the common Way to worldly Grandeur, is to study the *Temper*, and conform to the *Principles* of those, who are in a Condition to oblige them.

B 3

FOURTHLY,

Sermon

I.



FOURTHLY, That Plain-Dealing is the usual Bar and Impediment to a good Man's Advancement.

FIFTHLY, That it is still the Duty of a Good Man, notwithstanding the Allurements and Temptations of this World, to act agreeably to his Conscience, and the Laws of his God.

SIXTHLY, That a Person who acts thus impartially between the Commands of his Prince, and the Dictates of his Conscience, shall find infinite Comfort and Satisfaction, altho' he misses those Advantages, which Flatterers and Temporizers may gain at the present.

FIRST, The first Thing observable is, That Superiors, by a Stretch of their Authority, are willing to demand illegal and unwarrantable Things from *Ecclesiastical Persons*.

Notwithstanding we have a common Rule and Standard of our Actions, and the Boundaries of Good and Evil are sufficiently fix'd and determin'd; yet Great Men, who are given up to Lust, and Slaves to Ambition, are for removing the Fences at Pleasure, and *establishing Iniquity by a Law*. Their Stations make them Head-strong and Assuming, Positive and Imperious; and the not well understanding

standing the Limits of their Power, puts them upon a wrong Use and Application of it. Hence 'tis that they grow fond of themselves, and disrespectful to others, look upward with Envy, and downward with Disdain; are too Big to be controuled, and too Wise to err. They think Good and Evil to be arbitrary Things, and themselves Persons commission'd to enact them at pleasure. They are for a *Latitude in Principles*, and a *Licentiousness in Practice*; for Stretching the *Prerogative* to the Prejudice of Conscience, and for *Cutting* the Knot which they can't handsomely *untie*.

Now it is much to be fear'd that the Easiness and Compliance of *some*, who ought to have more Courage and Fidelity in their sacred Function, has given too great Encouragement to the exorbitant Demands of their *Superiors*. For tho' we should grant an *absolute Power* in the *Prince*, and *exact* an *unconditional Obedience* from the *Subject*; yet does it not follow that this Power should be transferr'd from *civil* to Matters *purely Spiritual*, or that this *Obedience* should *impose* upon the Consciences of Men, or evacuate the Commands of God. For this would be to blend and confound two distinct and independent Jurisdictions, and shamefully to *depress* our God, that we might *exalt* his *Vicegerent*: It would be to stretch the *Prerogative*, and confine the *Priesthood*; to strip the *Church*, and enrich the *State*; to be stingy to the *Mitre*, and too liberal

Sermon to the *Crown*; to be *Passive* to a Fault, and even *Loyal* to a Sin. In short, it would be to flatter Princes with a Power, which God never entrusted them with; to complement away the *Liberty* which Christ has given to his *Church*, and to persuade our *Ecclesiastical Governors* to stand for Cyphers in their own *Courts of Judicature*. An Excess this Way has, without Doubt, blown up the Vanity of *Princes*, and sometimes prevail'd with the *Subject*, to be not only *Passive* in his Obedience, but *Active* in his Compliance to their unjust Commands; the former of which will never cease to be an indispensable Duty, and the latter will always continue a damnable Sin.

The Sum and Substance then of what has been said, amounts to no more than this, That a false Notion of Power in *Superiors*, back'd with a tame and servile Temper in Dependents and Inferiors, and a Stretch of Conscience in Matters that are not dispensable with by the Laws of God, has made Princes aspiring in their Demands; persuaded them to think too highly of themselves, and too contemptibly of others, and by the sole Dint of their Authority, to put a Stamp upon Truth it self, and force any Doctrine to pass for Current and Orthodox. But,

SECONDLY, The next Observation from the Text is, That the Method and Artifice, by which Great Men think to prevail over mercenary Souls, is the specious

Specious Offer of Preferment and Honour. Sermon I.

Now the Truth of this Observation will appear from these three following Considerations.

First, The Prevalency of the Offer itself.

Secondly, The Agreeableness of it to human Nature.

Thirdly, The Condition of the Person that offers it.

First, The Offers of Honour and Preferment are very tempting and prevalent in themselves. The Height of a Station is apt to amuse the Eye, and overturn the Brain; and the *Kingdoms of this World*, and the *Glories thereof*, are ensnaring Proposals to aspiring Tempers. The Favour of a *Prince*, and the Nod of a *Courtier*; the *Greetings in the Markets*, and the Pre-eminence at an Entertainment; a Distinction of Quality, and the *uppermost Seats in the Synagogues*, have had a pernicious Influence upon popular Spirits, and made haughty and ambitious Persons look with Disdain and Contempt upon all below them. The Notion which *Balak* seems to have entertain'd of his Power, was to bribe the *Conscience*, and buy the *Curses* of the Prophet; and the same Principle runs thro' other Great Men, and puts a fatal Bias upon their Creatures and Dependents. Courtesy in Superiors has effected strange Things in some complaisant Gentlemen, and Bribes have been more potent and successful than Armies.

Sermon Armies. A seasonable Gift has often-

I. times stopp'd the Mouth of a terrible Adversary, and a *goodly* Preferment brought down the Stanchness of an Orthodox *Divine*. Honour is apt to dazzle our Eyes, and misguide our Steps, to clear up our Understandings, and melt down our Consciences; to infuse Light into the Heart, and Vigour into the Hand; to pervert the Will, and bias our Actions; to rectify the Notions of Good and Evil, and refine upon the old fashion'd Doctrines of our Ancestors: In one Word, it is apt to blunt our Satyr, and disarm our Fury; to overbear our Arguments, and silence our Tongues; to open another Scheme of Christian Duties, and give a *new*, but *surprizing*, Turn to the Brain of a *Casuiſt*. How strangely have some Men been enlighten'd! How wonderfully have they *grown wiser*! How suddenly have they discarded their old Principles! How shamefully shook Hands with their dearest Friends! And what is most of all surprizing, their Conversion has been in an Instant, and their former Scruples have vanished in a Moment, and what was design'd to harden them in their *Errors*, has been the happy Instrument of their *Conviction*.

But notwithstanding all these specious Pretences and Designs, these Flourishes and Salvoes of a temporizing Conscience, the World will be so ill-natur'd, as to miscall their *Zeal*, and question their *Reformation*; to see thro' the Masks and
Disguises

Disguises of designing Men, and discover the secret Hand behind the Curtain, which so plausibly turns round the Machines, so artificially changes the Scenes. But,

Sermon
I.

Secondly, This Offer of Preferment was more likely to succeed, because it was agreeable to the ambitious Desires of human Nature. And here no Body can deny, but that *Balak's* Politicks were regular, and the Scheme well laid; the Bait was plausible and inviting, and the Prophet attack'd on the right Side. And tho' the Event did not answer Expectation, it was more owing to the Interposition of Providence, and the Awe of a superior Power, than to the Courage and Inclination of *Balaam*. For if corrupted Nature had been left to her own Choice and Conduct, what Mortal could have kept his Ground? What Man could have been so brave and hardy, as to cope with the united Force of Honour and Interest? The Conquest in this Case was like to prove easy and delightful, and the Charms of Gold to be an Over-match for the Powers of Magick.

There is a great Degree of Pride and Ambition, which is planted in the very Root of our Nature, and discovers it self in the most considerable Actions of our Life. The Love of our selves is generally at the Bottom of our Projects, and the Prospect of *Honour* gives Life and Spirit to the most hazardous Undertakings: It cancels all former Friendships,
and

Sermon and supercedes Obligations : It despises

I. Danger, and bears down Opposition ;
breaks through the Ties of Nature, and
overturns the Principles of Religion and
Conscience. But,

Thirdly, Honour and Preferment may seem more tempting and valuable upon the Account of the Person that confers them. The Ear of a Prince is an uncommon Favour, and an Audience at Court is not easily obtain'd. There are a great many Difficulties that obstruct the Passage, and 'tis usual to pass through abundance of tedious Formalities and lingring Application to make our *Ad-dresses*, or present a *Petition*. Majesty is not to be approach'd at all Times, nor State and Grandeur laid aside to please the Humour of every Subject. Favou-rites, perhaps, may be heard, and fawn-ing Parasites caress'd and rewarded, but Men of Uprightness and Integrity are to be kept at a Distance, and Persons that bear no Character must not expect to ap-pear before Kings.

Since therefore the Access to Superiors is so difficult, and their Favours are so rare and uncommon; it is no Wonder that the Worth of them is magnify'd, and the Value augmented to an extrava-gant Rate. For it is not always so much the Greatness of the Gift, as the Quality of the Person that gives it, which makes it acceptable to the Receiver. A Royal Favour is the more to be esteem'd, be-cause it is sought for with Toil, and ob-tain'd

tain'd with Difficulty. Were the Purchase cheap, the Benefit might be neglected, and the Commonness of the Blessing take off from the real Value of it; but since it passes thro' so many Hands, and is conferr'd from such on high Station, it rises in Proportion to the Greatness of him that gives it, and so is more pleasing to the Ambition, and agreeable to the Temper, of him that receives it. But,

THIRDLY, The common Way to worldly Grandeur is to study the Tempers, and conform to the Principles of those who are in a Condition to oblige you. If *Balaam* would have Honour and Promotion, he must act as *Balak* will have him, and curse the *Israelites*, or lose the *Blessing* of the King. His Conscience must be easy and complaisant, pliant and conformable, and all the Powers in Heaven must be engag'd on his Side, whenever the Humour of his Prince requires it. Thus Religion, (tho' in it self pure and spiritual, and, like its Divine Author, *liable to no Variableness*, or *Shadow of Turning*,) is oftentimes born off from its native Simplicity, and wrested and warp'd to secular Purposes. It must be blended with Art, and disguis'd by Knavery; be allay'd with Superstition, and counterfeited by Hypocrisy: It must be moulded and temper'd to make it current and fashionable, and turn'd into ten thousand Shapes to render it agreeable to different Palates, and Variety of Ages: It must be gloss'd upon

Sermon upon and interpreted at Pleasure ; be
 I. taught the Language of Courts, and be
 made subservient to the Interest of Prin-
 ces : The Rigours of it must be soften'd,
 and the Penalties extenuated ; the pre-
 tended Excrescences par'd off, and the sub-
 stantial Duties dissembled ; the very Life
 of it stifled, and only the Shadow pre-
 serv'd. It must sooth the *Enthusiast*, and
 caress the *Debauchee* ; pervert the *Led-
 ed*, and excuse the *Ignorant* ; comfort the
Drunkard, and indulge the *Libertine* : It
 must be *Grimace* to the *Humorist*, and
Cruelty to the *Zealot* ; *Starchness* to the
Hypocrite, and *Craft* to the *Villain* ; *All
 Things to all Men*, and every Thing in Fact,
 but what it really is.

Thus is Religion taught to differ and
 vary, as much as the very Faces of its Pro-
 fessors ; and the same Scheme of Principles
 can no more suit with every Age and
 Humour, than the same Garment fit eve-
 ry individual Person in the World. It is
 no Wonder then, that designing Men are
 so apt to *veer* and *tack* about, and to pro-
 fitute their Conscience upon every new
 Turn of Government, if we consider the
 Principles of the Court they are depen-
 dent upon, and the Humours of those
 great Persons they have Expectation from.
 Tho' *Naaman* may proclaim the Great-
 ness of his *Cure*, and magnify the Power
 of that God who effected it, yet he can't
 tell how to be a Worshipper of him, un-
 less he have a Dispensation for *Bowing in
 the House of Rimmon* : For his Character

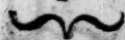
at Court must be kept up, and his Post Sermon
in the Government secur'd; his Devotions
are to be cramp'd by a *Place*, and his Gra-
titude stifled by a stingy Reserve for his
Master: And in this Thing it is to be hop'd,
that the Lord will pardon his *Servant*, and
not urge his Duty to the Prejudice of
his Interest; it is to be hop'd the God
of *Israel* will make some Allowances for
Reasons of State, and the Good of the Pub-
lick, and not too rigidly insist upon the
Conversion of a *Courtier*, or the Piety of
a *Soldier*.

Neither was this *Naaman's* particular
Case only, but every Age has produc'd
Instances of some Men, that would wil-
lingly serve their own Turns by their Pre-
tensions to *Godliness*, and every Reign has
furnish'd out some Doctrines, which the
Slaves to a Court, and the Seekers after
Preferment, have greedily suck'd in, and
zealously propagated. How often has *Law*
and *Divinity* been canvass'd, the *Statutes*
and the *Bible* been ransack'd, to give
Proof and Credit to a *Doubtful Title*?
How often have the Heads of *Divines*, and
the Pens of Criticks been employ'd, to
strike out some new and marvellous Light,
from the intricate and mysterious *Visions*
of *Ezekiel*, and to sooth the Ambition,
and justify the Undertakings of Princes,
by an odd and ridiculous Comment upon
the *Revelations*.

At other Times all the Distinctions of
the *Schools* must be sifted, to pick out
Reserves and *Salvoes* for a temporizing
Consci-

Sermon

I.



Conscience ; and the Pretensions of *Rulers* must be pronounc'd Just and Honourable, both by the Laws of God and Man, whenever their Humour, or Ambition leads them to enlarge their Dominions, and encroach upon the Rights of their innocent Neighbours.

1 Kings
xxii. 12.

Thus when *Ahab* and *Jehosaphat* reviv'd an old Claim to *Ramoth-Gilead*, and combin'd to enter upon it by Force of Arms, *all the false Prophets* declar'd that *they should go up against it, and prosper ; for God would certainly deliver that important Place into their Hands.* This was a comfortable Determination of a weighty Case, and these were Casuists fit to be consulted by ambitious Princes : And accordingly their Words were immediately receiv'd as the Oracles of God, and their Persons had in the highest Esteem and Veneration.

Numb. xvi.

When *Korah* and *his Company* pleaded for the *Holiness of the Congregation*, and encourag'd a Mutiny against *Moses* and *Aaron*, they were presently carest'd as *Patriots* of the *People*, and represented as Men serviceable in their Generation, and of the greatest Character and Renown in their Country. Rebellion (it seems) had sanctified their Persons, and their Pretensions must of Necessity be lawful, because they struck in with a Faction, and were countenanc'd by the *Populace*.

From hence we may gather, that it is not always *Right* but *Humour*, not *Religion* but *Interest*, that places a Man at the Head

Head of a Party, and gives him a Character in this World. He that suits his Discourse to the Times, and *prophefies smooth Things*; that *dawbs with untemper'd Mortar*, and calls Good Evil, and Evil Good, shall certainly have the Applauses of a corrupt and vicious Age; but he that has regard only to the Rules of Truth, and does not nicely distinguish the Persons of Men, shall meet with abundance of Coldness and Indifferency. For it is observable, that every Age has its peculiar and darling Doctrines, and can't endure the touching of some tender Points, which are contrary to the approv'd Maxims of Government and Policy.

Ask thy Fathers, and they will shew thee; enquire of the Elders, and they will tell thee, to what an insupportable Height the Jurisdiction of St. Peter was advanc'd, and how Crowns and Scepters were laid at the Feet of his haughty Successors; and then presently, upon a little Disgust, the Supremacy was transferr'd to the King, and all the Passages to Preferment stopp'd, unless you ador'd his Majesty, and vilify'd his Holiness

Sermon
I.

Deut.
xxxii. 7.

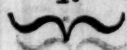
In succeeding Ages the Prerogative was screw'd up to the highest Degree, and a *Jus Divinum* pleaded in behalf of Monarchy and absolute Government; and after that, Liberty and Property cast the Balance to the Republican Side, and the natural Right of Free-born Subjects was a specious Colour for Faction and Rebellion.

C

Passive

Sermon

I.



Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance have had their several Rises and Turns in the World; and the murdering of *Kings*, and the *Binding of Nobles in Links of Iron*; the Pillaging of Estates, and the Banishment of the legal Owners, have been the Doctrines of our Saviour, and the Privileges of his *Saints*. The Story of the *Maccabees*, like a two-edged Sword, has cut every Way, and been pleaded for and against *Resistance*; and the *Theban Legion* has been either *Truth* or *Fiction*, as it has best suited with the Humour of *Princes*, and the Interest of *Writers*.

Lastly, Every one knows the Time when *Divines* have learnedly press'd the Necessity of *Church-Communion*, and set off the Danger of *Schism* and *Dissention* with a becoming Warmth and Zeal; and then the Tables have been turn'd on a sudden, and the same Men have been all over *Peace* and *Love*, *Gentleness* and *Forbearance*: *Moderation* has been in their Mouths, and *Lukewarmness* in their Hearts; *Latitude* in their Principles, and *Indifference* in their Practice.

All these Instances make it undeniably appear what Variety of Doctrines have been in Vogue in this Nation, and what Shifting and Turning there has been in the several Parts of Religion. It is not my Business to determine, which Point, upon a just State of the Question, may be right; but only to remark to you, that all these Doctrines have had their Rise and Fall, according to the Humours and Inclinations

Inclinations of Men in Authority; and the Way to worldly Advancement has been to swim with the Stream, and strike in with the fashionable Principles of the Times: So that the *Court*, not the *Bible*, has given Instructions to the *Prophet*, and the *Will of the Prince*, not the *Law of God*, has been the *Rule of the Subject's* Obedience. But,

Sermon
I.

FOURTHLY, As Flattery and Trimming have been the first Steps to Preferment; so Plain-Dealing and Sincerity have been the usual Bar and Impediment against it. The chief Reason why Merit is so seldom *dignify'd and distinguish'd*, and Men of Goodness and Piety are so often neglected, is, because a licentious Age can't bear the *Soundness* of their Doctrine, and the *Freedom* of their Reproofs.

If St. *John the Baptist* will urge the Unlawfulness of *Herod's* Marriage, he shall fall under the Displeasure of a wanton *Herodias*, and, in the End, lose both his Liberty and his Life.

If St. *Paul* will discourse of *Justice* and *Chastity* before a lascivious and tyrannizing *Felix*, he shall be dismiss'd from the Presence of the Governor with a Frown, and be rewarded with Bonds and Imprisonment for his Impudence and Presumption.

When *Elijah* reprov'd *Ahab* for his Injustice and Barbarity towards *Naboth*, and for selling himself to work Evil in the Sight

1 Kings
xxi. 20.

Sermon of the Lord; the Freedom of the Discourse was censur'd, and the *Man of God* represented as an Enemy to the Government. Had he sooth'd and flatter'd *Ahab* in his Vices, he should always have had a Share of his Affections, and been reputed his *very good Friend*; but to accuse him with Boldness, and rebuke him with Authority, was too unmannerly a Doctrine for a Court, too plain and blunt a Truth to go down with a King.

The like Misfortunes happen'd to *Micaiah*, when he declar'd against the Expedition into *Ramoth-Gilead*, and represented all *Israel* scatter'd upon the Hills, as *Sheep wanting a Shepherd*. For his Prophecy was rejected, and his Person ignominiously treated for telling the Truth: *Ahab* positively declar'd he hated him, because he did not prophesy Good concerning him, but Evil; and, as a Reward for his Sauciness, commanded him to be kept in Prison, and fed with Bread of Affliction, and Water of Affliction, till he return'd in Peace. Fetters and Stripes, perhaps, might bring the *Man of God* to a better Mind, and oblige him to preach a more courtly and seasonable Doctrine. For Truth is of too plain and homely an Aspect to be seen at all Times, and those that would dwell in Kings Houses, must be distinguish'd by the Smoothness of their Speech, as well as the Softness of their Raiment. Some Persons are too big for Reproof, and too wise for Instruction; and when Vice has once got the Sway and Ascendant of such Minds,

c. xxii.

v. 17.

v. 8.

1 Kings
xxi. 27.

Minds, it grows head-strong and assuming, rebellious and untractable, and discharges its Fury upon those who oppose the Torrent, and are for stopping the Growth of Infidelity. If the *Preachers of Righteousness* will be faithful Monitors, and speak Truth boldly, there will never be wanting *Ababs* to hate their Persons, and *Balaks* to dishonour their Function: Their *Plain-Dealing* will disgust their Rulers, and their Principles put a Stop to their Preferment; and lo, the Lord hath kept them back from Honour.

FIFTHLY, Notwithstanding the Allurements and Temptations of this World, it is still the Duty of a good Man to act agreeably to his Conscience, and the Laws of God. And here *Balaam* is so far a Pattern for our Actions, as he did not embrace the unreasonable Proposals, and comply with the unjust Demands of *Balak*. He boldly own'd himself a *Servant* to another *Master*, and so much at the Disposal of a superior Power, that if the King would give him his House full of Silver and Gold, he could not go beyond the Word of the Lord his God, to do less or more. The Answer was generous, and the Resolution brave; the Principle was rightly form'd, and the Example may be instructive to Posterity. For every one that acts by a Commission from God, as *Balaam* pretended to do, and is call'd in to give his Advice in Things pertaining to

Num. xxii.
18.

Sermon his Function, must either dishonour his
 I. great Master, and forfeit his own Character, or be particularly remarkable for these following Virtues:

First, Such an Uprightness and Sincerity of Mind, as will secure him from any mean Compliance with the Demands, or any sullen Flattery to the Persons of those who have the Rule over him.

Secondly, For such Care and Industry in all the Concerns of that great Master, whose he is, and whom he serves, as may prove him to be a true Ambassador of Christ, and a faithful Steward of the Mysteries of God.

Thirdly, For such Courage and Resolution in enforcing the Precepts of Christianity, and exacting Obedience from all Orders and Degrees of Men, as to shew him to have no other Aim in View, than the Honour of his God, and the Salvation of his Brethren.

He that is indued with these Qualifications, and faithfully discharges his Office in all these Respects, is the very Reverse of that fawning and temporizing Sycophant, whom I have so fully describ'd in the foregoing Discourse: And I have no farther Occasion to enlarge upon this Subject, or to make any other Use of the three last Observations, than to sum
 up

up the * Character of a good Man in a Sermon
Word or two.

I.
We may see then that he is a Man of *Conscience*, and not of *Interest*; free from *Design*, and unaccustom'd to *Flattery*; steady in his *Principles*, and regular in his *Practice*; devout in his *Life*, and uniform in his *Actions*. Tho' he is a Stickler for Government, and an Example of Obedience, he is no Friend to the Cabals, or Patron of the Injustice of his Governors. He neither robs his God to enrich his *Sovereign*, or depresses his *Sovereign* to exalt his *Subjects*. He has no Notion of the *State* in prejudice to the *Church*, nor owes any *Secret Service* to his *Prince*, contrary to his *publick* Engagements and Obligations to his *God*. The Rule of his Life is steady and unerring, and his *Conscience* void of Offence towards God and towards Man. His *Pen* is not mercenary, nor his *Lips* perfidious; his *Head* wavering, nor his *Heart* deceitful. He never wrests the Scripture from its genuine Sense, nor perverts the Text to his private Interest; he makes no false Comments upon St. *Paul* for the sake of a Party, nor conceals any necessary Truth in Complement to his Superiors. He has Courage to defend what was his Duty to assert, and Zeal to practice what was his Principle to preach. He is not to be carry'd

* The present Character of a good Man is drawn chiefly from his Christian Zeal, his Loyalty, and orthodox Principles; but a larger Encomium of him, as to his social Virtues, may be seen in the next Sermon.

Sermon away with *Shadows*, or amus'd with *Greatness*; not to be won by a *Smile*, or terrify'd by a *Frown*; not to be mov'd with *fair Words*, or bought off by real *Preferments*.

Since then the Character of this good Man is so charming and delightful, and the Virtues which compose it so rare and uncommon; since the Temptations to Vice are so prevalent, and the Proposals of Honour and Preferment so engaging; since Men of our Profession are generally attack'd from this Quarter, and the Tricks of State are carry'd on by the servile Compliances of Church-Men; it will not be improper, at the Close of this Discourse, to fortify our Minds against those Baits and Snares that are generally laid in our Way, and to encourage one another in *well-doing*, from a Prospect of that *Recompence of Reward*, which a conscientious Discharge of our Duty will intitle us to. For by this Means we shall convince our Superiors, that we look higher than the petty and trifling Considerations of this World, and are not so mercenary in our Tempers, and loose in our Principles, as they may fancy us to be. We shall declare to all Mankind, that we don't study to be *great* at the Expence of a *good* Conscience, or use any indirect means to gain higher and more honourable Stations than our Neighbours; but that we endeavour to promote the common Interest of the Church and State, and to vindicate the Honour of the Priesthood; and instead of being broken into Parties,

Parties, and led away by crafty Men, are willing to unite as *Brethren*, are zealous to act as *Christians*.

Sermon

I.

Now for our greater Encouragement in this Work, we may in the

SIXTH and last place consider, that Comfort and Satisfaction, which a Person that acts impartially between the Commands of his God, and the Dictates of his Conscience, does in part find *already*, and shall more fully experience *hereafter*, tho' he misses those Advantages, which Flatterers and Temporizers may gain in this World. For if the Performance of good Actions fills Men with Joy and Delight, certainly he shall have a more than ordinary Share of it, who has stood the Tryal in the most dangerous Times, and oppos'd himself against the most violent Temptations. For to withstand the Overtures of Interest and Honour, and vanquish the perverse Inclinations of intriguing Men, argues no inferior Degree of Virtue, and intitles a Man to no mean Reward. As the *Enterprize* was great, and the *Danger* uncommon, so the *Wages* shall be proportionable, and the *End* glorious.

If we look no farther than this World, I take the Reflections of a Man's Mind upon a well-spent Life, and the Assurances of a good Conscience in general, to be a great Encouragement to his Actions, and no small Comfort under his Sufferings: And in the Case before us, when any Person has been employ'd in publick Concerns,

Sermon

I.



Concerns, and not been born off from his Duty by any private Interest, the Reflection upon his past Services must be more pleasing to himself, and the Applauses of his Conscience rapturous and transporting.

If perilous Times should arise, and God in his Anger should give up a rebellious and disobedient Nation, what inward Peace and Satisfaction must those few good Men have, who, like *Moses*, have stood in the Gap, and endeavour'd to stop the Torrent of Infidelity; who by all suitable Arguments have oppos'd the modish and fashionable Sins of the Age, and not basely cring'd and truckled to Men in Authority. Their present Comfort and Rejoycing is, that in an *honest Simplicity, and godly Sincerity, they have had their Conversation in this World*, and not been carry'd away by Prejudice and Partiality, or influenc'd by the ill Examples of great Men; that they have advanc'd no Principles destructive to the Constitution, nor encourag'd any Practices offensive to God; that they have neither unhing'd the Government, or betrayed the Church; neither flatter'd their Superiors, or misled their Brethren.

Whatsoever, therefore, shall be the Fate of their native Country, and whatever Afflictions shall light upon the Church, they have made a timely Provision for themselves, and secur'd a *Treasure* in another *Kingdom*. As they have been famous for a bold and undaunted Profession of their Faith, and appear'd openly in Defence

Defence of Christ and his Gospel before *the Kings and Rulers* of this World, so they shall be own'd by their God and Saviour, and applauded by Saints and Angels in another. The great Master whom they serve is both able and willing to promote them, and the Reward of their Service will infinitely compensate their Diligence and Fidelity: It is not subject to Casualties, or encumber'd with Disadvantages; not to be fought for with Flattery, or procur'd by Bribery; but it is the Effect of our Courage and Zeal, and the Purchase of a pure and undefil'd Conscience.

Sermon
I.


Wherefore, *my beloved Brethren*, be ye *stedfast and unmoveable* in your holy Profession: Slight the deceitful Overtures of this World, and embrace the more advantageous Proposals of another: Serve a Master who is truly honourable, and pursue your real Interest by just and reputable Means. Place your *Reversion* in Heaven against the troublesome and vexatious Possessions on Earth, and the certain Favour of your God against the fickle Humours of earthly Potentates. Oppose Life and Immortality to Death and Disgrace, and a bright and triumphant Crown of Glory to the fading and momentary Honours of this World: And then you will come to a just Notion of what is truly great and magnificent, and know where to make your Addresses for substantial Preferments. You will abhor the mean Compliances, and pity the mercenary Tem-
pers

Sermon pers of some of your Brethren. You will
 I. condemn the Frowns of haughty Men,
 and if *Kings should arise that know not Joseph*, you will overlook the Neglects of
 such an ungrateful Court. You will carry
 your Eye beyond the dazzling Great-
 ness of temporal Honours, and your Cou-
 rage will be augmented, and your Hopes
 enliven'd by a glorious Prospect of Futu-
 rity. *Amen.*

*A Good Man supported by his
Virtues.*

IN TWO
SERMONS

Preach'd at St. PAUL's,

Before the

Lord-Mayor of LONDON.

PROV. xiv. 14.

— *A good Man shall be satisfied
from Himself.*

A DESIRE of Ease is implanted Sermon
in the very Make and Constitu- II.
tion of our Souls, and the Pur-
suit of Happiness is the constant Labour
and Employment of our Lives. All our
Searches and Enquiries are to find out
Methods to better our present Condition,
and all our Care and Solitude is to re-
dress the *real, or pretended* Evils of hu-
man

Sermon man Life. Heaven and Earth are ransack'd for the Seat of Happiness, and
 II. Contemplation is employ'd, and Books are turn'd over to discover the Road to her *Mansion-house*. Nature is consulted, and Fortune caress'd, to make us happy; Antiquity is call'd in to our Assistance, and the several Plans of *Philosophy* presented to our Eyes. The most hazardous Voyages are undertaken in Quest of this *valuable Treasure*, and the Products of remotest Countries imported, to compleat our Felicity.

Yet notwithstanding all this *Labour of the Hand, and Vexation of the Spirit*, the unfortunate Sons of Men are generally at a Loss in their Searches after *Happiness*; and, like a Traveller that mistakes his Way when he first sets out on the Road, the farther they advance, at the greater Distance they keep from their Journey's End; the faster they pursue, the faster the *Goddeſs* flies from their Embraces; and whilst they dream of Enjoyment, and amuse themselves with an imaginary Paradise, they are lull'd in the Arms of Destruction, and ready to be swallow'd up in the *Gulph of Perdition*.

Now the great Occasion of all this Misfortune is principally to be imputed to our own selves, and may be well reckon'd the deplorable Effect of our Ignorance and Sensuality. We fail of the Attainment, because we don't use right Measures in the Pursuit of Happiness: We miss the *Prey*, because we are unskilful in the

the Chase. Our Appetites and Affections are not duly regulated, nor our Thoughts employ'd upon their proper Objects. We are too easily diverted by Trifles, and impos'd upon with Counterfeits; too frequently misled by Phantoms, and dazzled with Appearances; and we too greedily catch at Shadows, and build upon Contingencies. Thus poor deluded Man walks on in his own Vanity, and disquiets himself in vain; courting Happiness in ten thousand Shapes, and yet stopp'd in his Career, or baulk'd in his Expectation every Moment! Alas! our Fancy is ungovernable, and our Imagination too apt to rove: We carry our Eye from our selves, and view the bewitching Prospect at a Distance, whereas our Curiosity should be restrain'd, and our Searches confin'd home. The most material Discoveries are to be made from our selves, and the Seat of Happiness is in a Man's own Breast. *Nemo potest non beatissimum esse, qui est totus aptus ex sese, quiq; in se uno sua ponit omnia.* The quieting of our Passions and the Government of our Minds, the Exercise of our Reason and the Discharge of Conscience, the Practice of Virtue and avoiding of Vice, are the only Evidences of present Comfort, and the surest Foundations for everlasting Felicity.

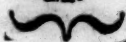
Sermon
II.

Tull.

A good Man shall be satisfied from himself.

In treating of these Words, I shall confine my self to the following Method:

FIRST,



FIRST, To give some short Account, and general Character of a *Good Man*.

SECONDLY, To enlarge more particularly upon that internal Satisfaction which arises to him from the Contemplation of *himself*.

THIRDLY, To point out some Times and Seasons, when this *Contemplation of himself*, or Reflection upon a virtuous Life, may be the greatest Comfort and Support to him.

FIRST, I am to give you some short Account and general Character of a *Good Man*.

A *Good Man* is something which fills the Mind with such a lovely Idea, as makes every one fond of the Appellation, and ambitious of the Honour of it. A *Good Man* has born up his Reputation in the worst of Times, and maintain'd his Character in Despite of Detraction. A *Good Man* has been the Idol of the People, as well as the Care of the Publick; the Theme for the *Poet* to flourish, as well as the *Orator* to declaim upon. Every Sect and Profession in the World have been willing to appropriate this honourable Badge to themselves, and have fancied there was some peculiar Excellency in their own *Party*, which must give them
the

the Preference and Superiority over others. But alas ! the Virtues which constitute a *Good Man*, are no more to be confin'd to the Parties and Cabals of our Times, than the Heat of the Sun to a Corner of the World, or Day and Night to one Climate.

The *Stoics*, of all *Philosophers*, have made the greatest Pretences to the Rigour and Severity of Virtue, and bestow'd the highest Encomiums upon their *wise* or *good Man*. They have divested him of all Passion to prove his Alliance to the Deity, and in some Cases given him the Preference to the *Immortal Gods*. *Seneca* seems to run up the Character of a *Good Man* to the same inimitable Pitch, that *Tully* does his compleat *Orator* : There is so much required to finish the *One*, as can never be obtain'd in this Life, and so many Virtues must unite in the Other, as are no Ways consistent with *Flesh and Blood*.

The *Scriptures* (which make such frequent Mention of a *Good Man*) have recommended better Rules to attain to his Excellencies, than any of the most elaborate Writings of the *Moralists* ever could do. For, tho' they don't set him off in all the wild Panegyrick, in all the mad and extravagant Rants of the *Stoics* ; yet they ascribe to him as much as is proper for a Mortal to receive, and give him the utmost Advantage, which is consistent with *Sobriety* and *Reason*. They place him indeed in a State of Dependence, and make him subservient to his
D Almighty

Sermon
II.

Almighty Sovereign; yet they furnish him with the best Instructions to please his Maker here, and give him the Assurance *to be like him hereafter*. And, forasmuch as the divine Nature is most conspicuous to this lower World in the Works of Mercy and Providence, and does more effectually command our Veneration, upon the Account of his Goodness and Liberality, than any other of his astonishing and unsearchable Attributes; we are to take the Dimensions of a *Good Man* as he copies after the Deity; and to consider his Virtues more as they relate to *Society*, and are instrumental towards the Promotion of Piety and the Well-government of the World, than as they consist in any *intellectual* Perfections, any *recluse* or *abstracted* Exercises of Devotion.

Our blessed Saviour, in his most incomparable *Sermon on the Mount*, directs us to universal Love and Charity, to Candor and Civility, to Munificence and Liberality, in order to be reputed the *Children of our Father which is in Heaven, who maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the just and on the unjust*.

Matt. v. 45.

Now, if we take our Measures from this Standard, and endeavour to characterize a *Good Man* in a Word or two, we must say, That he is an Imitator of God, and a Lover of his Brethren, a Distinguisher of the Virtues of Good Men, and a Friend to the Persons of bad Ones: Free without

without Distinction, and generous without Pride; affable without Design, and condescending without Affectation; easy of Access, and ready to communicate; merciful in his Temper, and unbiass'd in his Favours; open in his Heart, and liberal with his Hand. If we consider him as a *Prince* or a *Subject*; as a *Parent* or an *Husband*; as a *Neighbour* or a *Friend*; as a *Magistrate* or a *Private Man*; we shall find that one loving Principle runs thro' his whole Life, and gives Spirit and Activity to all his Undertakings.

His Actions are not sullied by Self-Love, nor his Projects cramp'd by a narrow Genius. The Good of the Publick engrosses his Thoughts, and the providing for others employs his Time. The Law of God is the Rule of his Conscience, and the Service of his Country the Glory of his Life: His greatest Care is to avoid Offence, and his sole Want is an Object for his Charity.

This is that *Good Man*, whose Praise is in this World, and whose Reward in another; whose Bounty is proclaim'd by *Babes and Sucklings*, and whose Name is written in the *Book of Life*. This is that *Good Man* for whom *St. Paul* tells us, *One would even dare to die*; whereas the righteous Man can lay Claim to no such Favour, nor can common Right and strict Justice glory in the Performance of such heroick Friendship.

I shall detain this Audience no longer upon this general Subject, than whilst I

Sermon sum up the Encomium, and give the finishing Strokes to the Character of a *Good Man*, in these lofty and pompous Expressions of the Son of Sirach: *He lived peaceably in his Habitation, and was honoured in his Generation, and became the Glory of the Times. Whereas some there be, which have no Memorial, who are perished as though they had never been, and are become as though they had never been born, and their Children after them; there is still a good and a merciful Man, whose Righteousness shall never be forgotten. With his Seed shall continually remain a good Inheritance, and his Children are within the Covenant. His Seed stands fast, and his Children for his Sake. His Seed shall remain for ever, and his Glory shall not be blotted out. His Body shall be buried in Peace, and his Name liveth for evermore.*

Eccles. xlv.
6, 7, 8, 10,
11, 12, 13,
14.

SECONDLY, I come to enlarge more particularly upon that internal Satisfaction which arises to a *Good Man*, from the Contemplation of *himself*: And this I shall endeavour to do,

First, By considering this Satisfaction in its own Nature.

Secondly, In Exclusion of worldly Things.

Thirdly, As it takes in a Prospect of Futurity.

First, If we would consider the Satisfaction, which a *Good Man* receives from *himself*,

himself, in its own real Nature, I can define it be nothing else, but that Comfort and Pleasure which redounds to a Man, from the Reflections of his Mind upon a virtuous and religious Course of Life. This Comfort and Pleasure is what comes generally recommended to us under the Character of a *Good Conscience*, upon the Peace and Tranquillity of *which*, the Scriptures bestow such frequent and lofty Encomiums. I intimated to you before, that this *Satisfaction* was the more visible Effect of Goodness and Beneficence; but this does not hinder it from extending it self to all the Instances of Duty, wherein a Man stands bound to God, his Neighbour, and *himself*.

When a Man considers himself as a *rational Creature*, and endued with all those Abilities and Qualifications which place him above the Level of sublunary Beings, and next in order to those immortal Spirits which wait upon the Throne of God; it can be no small Satisfaction to him that he has maintained his Post, and *quitted himself like a Man*; that he has acted up to the Dignity of human Nature, and employ'd his several Talents and Graces according to the Interest and Design of the Donor.

Again, when a Man shall consider the Obligations he lies under to his *Maker*, and the Right which accrues to God over the Works of his own Hands, by Virtue of Creation, Preservation, and Redemption; he will find inexpressible Satisfaction

Sermon II. faction in making some Returns to such a beneficent God, and recommending himself to the Favour of the Almighty, by the Exercise of Faith and Affiance, and by the Acts of Obedience and Resignation.

LASTLY, If a Man considers himself as Part of the *Universe*, (as the Emperor *Marcus Antoninus* commonly expresses it) and not so much design'd to carry on some secret Intrigues of his *own*, as born for the Good of the *Publick*, and dedicated from the Womb to the Service of his Brethren; how charm'd and enamour'd must he be, with the very Thoughts of discharging these relative Duties faithfully, and acting uprightly in every respective Capacity? With what holy Indignation does he cast his Eyes upon the Troubles and Devastations of this World, and look upon those haughty Spirits who are hurried on *with Bitterness and Rage, and always biting and devouring one another?* who are perpetually engaged in Broils and Contentions, and seem willing to leave the reproachful Monuments of their Cruelty and Revenge, where-ever they have gotten the upper Hand. He is free from that Disquietude and Remorse which flows from such inhuman and barbarous Actions; and his present Satisfaction is, that he has loved all Mankind more out of a Principle of *Affinity* than any Prospect of *Gain*, and upon all Occasions respected their

their Persons, and bore with their Infirmities, solicited their Cause, and promoted their Interest, without the least Favour or Partiality.

Sermon
II.

These, my Brethren, are the principal Instances of our Duty, upon the Performances of which, we look back with Pleasure and Delight, and are filled with such Joy and Rapture as can be only known to a devout Soul, and is better felt than expressed.

O blessed Lord! *who knowest our Down-sitting and Up-rising, and spiest out all our Goings, do thou try our Reins, and seek the Ground of our Heart: Prove our Integrity, and examine our Thoughts: Look well, if there be any Way of Wickedness in us, and lead us into the Way everlasting.* Do thou enable us to survey our selves, and to penetrate into the Recesses of our Consciences; to review our Actions, and compare our spiritual Performances; and from the Assurances of a Well-spent Life to pronounce that comfortable Sentence, *Well done good and faithful Servant*, upon our Souls. Keep us from those Fears and Anxieties which haunt and perplex the Wicked; from those *Smitings, Reproaches, and Prickings of Heart*, which are the present Lot of the Sinner, and the dreadful Earnest of ensuing Vengeance. *Let every one prove his own Work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone.* *Conscientia bene actæ vitæ, multorumq; beneficiorum recordatio jucundissima est.* The Correspondence between the

Pl. cxxxix.
23, 24.

Gal. vi. 4.

Cicero.

Sermon
II.Pf. cxix.
165.

Practice and the Rule, and the Conformity of the Life of Man to the Laws of God, refreshes the Spirits, and creates a perpetual Harmony in the Soul: The Peace of Conscience cheers the Heart, and brightens the Countenance; removes the Clouds of Despair from the Brow, and dispels all melancholy Vapours from the Thought. *Great Peace, O God, have those that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend. Marvellous Light springs up to the pure in Mind, and spiritual Refreshments descend upon the Breasts of thy faithful Servants.*

Secondly, I am to consider a Good Man's internal Happiness, exclusively of all outward Things.

Aristotle has long ago thought fit to range the Notion of Advantage under the three Heads, of *Mind, Body, and Fortune*; and tho' he has given the Preference to the *former*, and made it the principal Ingredient of Happiness, yet, has he attributed something extraordinary and surprizing to the *two Latter*, and made them in a great Measure necessary to, and in some Sense complete of, Happiness.

This Doctrine must be very well guarded, or else it will entrench upon the true Christian Greatness, and take off from the Honour and Dignity of Virtue: For if Health and Riches are any Ways necessary towards the Constitution of Happiness, the Consequence is unavoidable, that those who have the greatest Affluence

ence of these Blessings, are in the fairest Probability to be happy : But the contrary to this Assertion is so apparent, that we oftentimes see Poverty and Disgrace in actual Possession of the Prize, and some truly Christian Virtues, (such as *Hope, Affiance, and Resignation,*) which bid the fairest for Happiness, to be only practicable in a low and abject State of Life.

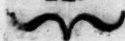
Sermon
II.


It must be allowed, that *Condescension, Liberality, and Munificence,* are suppos'd to be the Attendants of an high Fortune, and the sole Accomplishments of the Rich and the Noble : But we shall find a vulgar Error even in this Assertion, if we consider that the fore-mentioned Virtues don't so much consist in the Management of the *Body,* and the Gift of the *Hand,* as in the Dispositions of the *Soul,* and the Willingness of the *Mind.*

To bring this Point to an Issue : We are to consider that the christian Law has plac'd all its Professors in an equal Capacity of Happiness, and, in order to the Attainment of it, has confin'd their Desires to *Food and Raiment,* and commanded them *to be content* with what is barely *necessary,* without coveting *Superfluities.* Nay, tho' the divine Wisdom should think it expedient sometimes to cut us short in this Respect, and expose us to the Hardships of Hunger and Nakedness; we have no Reason to suppose our unfortunate Circumstances any Impediment to our Virtue, but rather a Furtherance of the same ; because they throw us more
entirely

Sermon entirely on the divine Favour, and excite

II.



a more holy and vigorous Affiance in that Almighty Being, whose sovereign Will has the sole and absolute Disposal of us. The Advantage of Wealth, and the Addition of Respect are only so far instrumental towards the Propagation of Virtue, as they render the outward Act the more remarkable, and make the Circumstances of the Agent beneficial to the Community: But in reference to a Man's self, Good and Evil are confin'd to the Mind, and have no real Communication with external Advantages. The Badge of Distinction is fix'd upon another Place, and the honourable Denomination is taken from the inward Qualities. External Blessings are but of small Importance, neither is the Largeness of the Purse, or the Strength of the Constitution, any additional Security to a Mind truly season'd with Vertue and Holiness. The Weight of Adversity can never bend down the Soul, nor the Walls of a Prison inclose the Freedom of Thought. Casualties can be no Surprize to an undaunted Resolution; neither can Poverty or Scandal obscure the Glories of Virtue. *A Good Man* (says *Seneca*) "is happy within himself, and independent of Fortune, and his Virtue is to be seen through all Oppositions." And lest this should seem too much like a *stoical* Rant, the Son of *Sirach* has assured us to the same Purpose, *That whether a Man be rich or poor, if he have a good Heart to-*
wards

wards the Lord, he shall always rejoice *Sermon*
with a chearful Countenance. *II.*

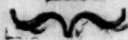
Thus is a Good Man in a Christian and Divine, as well as a Moral and Philosophical Acceptation of the Phrase, truly satisfied from himself. But farther yet,

Thirdly, Christianity gives a Good Man more ample Satisfaction from a Prospect of a glorious *Futurity*, which being founded upon the immutable Promise and Veracity of God, is of equal Validity and Support to the Soul, as if it were actually present. St. Peter makes Use of this very Argument to comfort the Primitive Christians under their Persecutions, and tells them of *rejoicing greatly in the abundant Mercy of God, who hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, we love: In whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory.* *1 Pet. i. 3, 8.*

Our Christian Religion was design'd to assist us in this *Valley of Tears*, and by the Certainty of an ensuing Reward, to encourage the Work assign'd to us, to go on with Pleasure. *As we walk by Faith, and not by Sight*, so we are comforted with a reverfionary Bliss, and must make a future Expectance over-ballance a present Calamity. The pious Soul is always fill'd with Rapture and Extasy; and tho' she be doom'd to Flesh and Blood, and forc'd to dwell with Mesek, and to have her Habitation among the Tents of Kedar; yet she scorns the dirty Acquaintance of
this

Sermon this World, and maintains a Society and

II. *Conversation in Heaven.* She opens the



Window, and enlarges the Prospect; carries her Enquiries beyond the Body, and takes her Progress into another Country; dwells upon the Contemplations of Eternity, and presents herself with some Glympses and Anticipations of Paradise.

O! then taste, and see how gracious the Lord is. Walk with him and rejoice, because your Names are written in Heaven.

Luke x. 20.

Pf. lxxxix.

16, 17, 18.

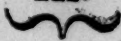
Blessed is the People, O Lord, that can rejoice in thee; they shall walk in the Light of thy Countenance: Their Delight shall be daily in thy Name, and in thy Righteousness shall they make their Boast. For thou art the Glory of their Strength, and in thy Loving-kindness thou shalt lift up their Horns. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON III.

PROV. xiv. 14.

— *A good Man shall be satisfied
from himself.*

IN my former Discourse, I propos'd Sermon
to prosecute this Assertion of So- **III.**
lomon, in the following Order and 
Method.

FIRST, By giving you some short
Account, and general Character of
a *Good Man*.

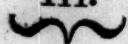
SECONDLY, By enlarging more
particularly upon that internal Sa-
tisfaction, which arises to him from
the Contemplation of *himself*.

THIRDLY, By pointing out some
Times and Seasons, when this *Con-
templation of himself*, or Reflection
upon a virtuous Life, may be the
greatest Comfort and Support to
him.

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Sermon

III.



I have already finished my short Account and general Character of a *Good Man*, and made such Discants, as I thought proper, upon that internal Satisfaction which arises to him, from the Contemplation of *himself*.

I shall now proceed in the

THIRD Place, to point out some Times and Seasons, when this *Good Man's* Contemplation of *himself*, or Reflection upon a virtuous Life, may be the greatest Comfort and Support to him.

Tho' Virtue is such a Friend and Assistant, as is always ready and at Hand, and perpetually keeps the Soul in a pleasant and cheerful Posture; yet, there are some Occasions which will try her Constancy; some Seasons that demand her more than ordinary Assistances. Upon such Emergencies, she is never backward or stingy, never dastardly or timorous; but exerts her Vigour in Proportion to the Danger, and carries her Votaries thro' the most amazing Difficulties. When the *Clouds gather*, and the *Storms arise*, the Pilot betakes himself to the Helm, and steers his Course with an even Hand, and by a steady Compass. It may, therefore, perhaps, be worth our while to shift the Scene for a Moment, and to consider the Sons of Men as involved in some remarkable Distresses, and to see how their Virtue will comfort and relieve them under all.

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First,

First, It will comfort them under a *Public Calamity.*

Sermon
III.

Secondly, Under a *Private Affliction.*

Thirdly, Under a *False Accusation.*

Fourthly, In the Time of *Sickness.*

Fifthly, At the Hour of *Death.*

Sixthly, In the Day of *Judgment.*

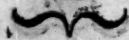
First, If we consider a *Good Man* in Relation to the *Public*, we shall find him best supported in all *National Calamities*, and most effectually reliev'd from the *Insults* of the common *Enemy*, by the *Aids* and *Assistances* of his *Virtues*.

In the *Destruction* of *Kingdoms* it is observable, that the *Fate* of the *Inhabitants* is promiscuous, and that there can be no particular *Distinction* made between the *Treatment* of good and bad *Men*: But it is still remarkable, that, either *before* these *National Judgments* are brought upon a *People*, the wise *Disposer* of *Events* has been frequently pleas'd to remove some select *Friends* from approaching *Danger*, or else to recommend them *afterwards*, to the *Mercy* of their *Conquerors* in a *foreign Land*.

Of both these *Usages*, we have frequent *Instances* in the *Scriptures*, and are presented with such *Interpositions* of *Providence*, in *Favour* of *God's Saints* and *Servants*, as may enamour us with those *Principles*, and make us emulous of those *Practices*, which have procur'd such miraculous *Protections* and *Deliverances*.

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III.



rances. We find *Lot* removed from the Destruction of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, and the *City Zoar* preserv'd for a Receptacle and Asylum of that *Preacher of Righteousness*, and his rescu'd Family. When *Huldab* had prophesied the Fate of *Jerusalem*, we read that *King Josiah* was exempted from the common Calamity by his Tears and Repentance, and was to be prevented by a friendly Death, from beholding the Ravage of his Dominions, and the Slaughter of his Subjects: *Because thine Heart was tender, (saith the Lord God of Israel,) and thou didst humble thy self before God, when thou heardst his Words against this Place, and against the Inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thy self before me, and didst rent thy Clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord. Behold, I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy Grave in Peace, neither shall thine Eyes see all the Evil that I will bring upon this Place, and upon the Inhabitants of the same.*

2 Chr.

xxxiv.

28.

27,

After this terrible Judgment was completed, and the *Jews* were carried Captive to *Babylon*, we find the merciful Providence of God attending his faithful Servants in Exile, and the Virtues of *Daniel* and his Adherents distinguished and rewarded by the *Eastern Monarchs*, and the Patience and Piety of *Ezra and Nehemiah* finally crown'd with a glorious Restoration.

But,

But, however the Case may happen in Sermon
Respect of particular Providences; or III.
supposing, at present, that a Good Man
should be Partaker with his Brethren in
any common or National Calamities; yet,
forasmuch as his Virtues have made him
a loyal Subject and a faithful Citizen, we
shall find him under no Concern for be-
traying a publick Trust, under no Regret
for being accessary to the Ruin of his na-
tive Country. In the Height of Wars Luke xxi.
and Rumours of Wars, and in the midst of 25, 26.
the Distress and Perplexity of Nations,
when Mens Hearts fail them for Fear, and
for looking after those Things which are co-
ming on the Earth; a Good Man's Forti-
tude is conspicuous, his Expectations are
enlarged, and his Hopes extend to Fu-
turity. He has been wise to true and
lasting Purposes, and made a timely Se-
curity of the better Part; so that his
Heart is invulnerable, his Treasure is
guarded, and no Breach or Inroad can
be made upon his Conscience, without
his own Consent and Approbation. The
Peace of Mind is not to be molested by
Sword and Famine, and Virtue is a Trea-
sure never to be injur'd by Captivity. Of
this we have several Instances in the Pro-
phets and wise Men of Antiquity, whose
Faith and Constancy follow'd them into
Exile, and supported them in a foreign
Land. Some of these illustrious Persons
I have mentioned before, and I shall beg
Leave to add to their Number what

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* Tully

Sermon
III.

* Tully has recorded in Praise of *Marcus Regulus*, (viz.) "That he could not so much derogate from the Virtues of such an Heroe, as to think him disturbed, unhappy, or miserable in the midst of the *Carthaginian* Torture. For the Greatness of his Soul was not to be lessened by the Exquisteness of his Pain, neither did his Gravity or Fidelity, his Constancy or his Courage suffer any Eclipse in his Adversity: For his Mind being guarded by Virtue could not be subject to any outward Assault; and though the Body was in Durance, the Soul still preserved her native Freedom."

Secondly, A good Man's Virtue relieves him under a private Affliction.

By a private Affliction, I mean any Disaster which may befall a Man in his single Capacity, or private Station of Life, such as the Misfortune of his Family, the impairing of his Health, the Diminution of his Estate, or the Loss of his good Name. In most of these Respects we find *Job* attack'd, when his Territories were ravag'd by the *Sabeans*, and his Servants slain with the Edge of the Sword; when

* Nec vero ego Marcum Regulum, ærumnosum, nec infelicem, nec miserum unquam putavi: Non enim magnitudo animi ejus excruciebatur a Pœnis, non gravitas, non fides, non constantia, non ulla virtus, non deniq; animus ipse, quia tot virtutum præsidio, tantoq; comitatu, cum corpus ejus caperetur, capi certe ipse non potuit. *M. Tull. Cic. Par. 2.*

his Houses and Goods were demolished, and his Sons and Daughters buried in the Ruins of them; when Messenger upon the Heels of Messenger brought him the fatal Tidings, and every Report was aggravated with some more astonishing and dismal Circumstance: Yet, for all this, the *Man of Patience* kept his Temper and Integrity, and made no other Reply to the Dispensations of Providence, but, *Naked came I out of my Mother's Womb, and naked shall I return thither: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly: In all this,* the perfect and upright Man stood equally pois'd by his Virtues, and did not lean either to the Right Hand or the Left, by any angry Remonstrances or womanish Complaints.

Now against the like unfortunate Accidents, the same Succours and Support are still administred to good Men; the same unspotted Conscience, and unshaken Piety, will cope with Dangers and surmount Distresses. Patience has arm'd a good Man against Crosses and Disappointments, and Resignation has dispos'd him for any Changes or Vicissitudes of Fortune: Affiance in Providence has sweeten'd the bitter Cup of Adversity, and Faith in God's Promises made even Persecution and Martyrdom to be embrac'd with Joy and Thanksgiving. O triumphant Innocence! O impregnable Virtue! Look but once more upon this suffering and afflicted

Sermon
III.

Heroe: See, see, how this *stedfast and unmoveable* Man passes through the *Valley of Tears* with Cheerfulness and Intrepidity; facing every Storm with Resolution, bearing every Shock with Wisdom, and improving every Loss to Advantage. When the *Winds* begin to *rise*, and the *Waves* to *roar*; when *Fearfulness and Trembling* come upon the Sinner, and an horrible Dread overwhelms the Guilty, a good Man can retire peaceably into his own Breast, and find the greatest Calm and Serenity within himself. He is not prick'd with the Consciousness of any sinful Misdemeanor, nor are his Looks pallid, or his Countenance disorder'd by any secret Rebukes from within. He has no Akings of Heart, or Fore-bodings of Conscience; no Dread of Privacy, or Fear of himself; no Resort to his *Bottle* for Ease, or Refuge to *Company* for Protection.

Thirdly, A good Man's Virtue relieves him under a *false Accusation*. This was never more remarkable than in the Lives and Actions of the *Primitive Christians*, who, by the Strength of their Piety, bore up against the Malice of *Jew and Gentile*; and clear'd themselves from the Imputation of Atheism, and Disloyalty to the Government; from being Disturbers of the publick Peace, and *Setters forth of strange Doctrine*; by a solemn Appeal to the Tribunal of their own Conscience.

Whoever looks into the *Apologies* and other Writings of the *Fathers*, will find Abundance of Arguments to this Purpose:

pose: But because these Labours are not the Subject of every One's Meditation, I shall endeavour to clear up the Point under Debate, from an Instance or two in *St. Paul's Life*.

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When this great Apostle was accus'd at *Jerusalem* for Riot and Sedition, he tells his own Countrymen and the Roman Governor, that *he had lived in all good Conscience before God until that Day*. Acts xxiii.

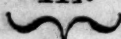
When *Tertullus* renewed the same Charge of Tumult and Heresy against him, he had Recourse to the same Topick for an Answer: *Herein (says he) do I exercise my self, to have always a Conscience void of Offence towards God, and towards Man*. xxiv. 16.

This was an Argument beyond Denial, a Proof too big for Confutation; the best Evidence to buoy up the Courage of the Prisoner, and the most lasting Support under Fetters and Confinement. What unspeakable Comfort must flow from a generous and undaunted Appeal to the Knowledge of the whole World, for the Manner and Course of our Life? What Extasy of rejoicing must arise from the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with flesbly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our Conversation in this World? 1 Cor. i. 12.

Then fret not thy self, O my Soul, at the Contrivances of evil Doers; nor be thou full of Heaviness and disquieted within me, when false Witnesses rise up against thee, and lay to thy Charge Things which thou knowest not. Let Malice storm,

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III.



and Censure do her Worst; let Informations be lodg'd, and busy Sycophants encourag'd; do thou look higher than an idle Story or an officious Lie: Do thou form a better Interest, when Envy would traduce, and Power crush, thee: Contract a more honourable Relation, and secure a more lasting Friendship, *when thy Father and thy Mother forsake thee, and thy Kindred and Acquaintance would break off their Correspondence, and betray the most sacred Trusts, for some mercenary Designs of their own.*

Fourthly, The Contemplation of a good Life, is the best Support in the Time of Sicknefs.

Although Man be encompass'd with Infirmities, and hourly threatened with Death, yet, the Attacks of Sicknefs are an uncommon Surprize, and the Management of diseas'd Persons, is something peculiar and romantick. The Neighbourhood is alarm'd at the News, and all the Family is put into Hurry and Confusion; the Servants are officious, and the Relations sad; Physicians are consulted, and Medicines applied: But the Cure oftentimes begins at the wrong End, and the Prescription can be of little Efficacy to a guilty Patient. *It is neither Herb, nor mollifying Plaister that restoreth to Health, but the Infusions of Grace which strengthen the Heart, and the Power of thy Word, O Lord, which bealeth all Things.*

Wisd. xvi.
12.

Happy

Happy is he, who has placed his Trust in this never-failing Remedy! Who has made his God his Friend, and his Conscience his Physician!

III.

I would not by these Suggestions insinuate, that Man was to dwell upon Miracles, or that Religion should introduce such a *Stoical Apathy*, as to transform Men into Stones, or totally extinguish the Sense of Pain: But I am still confident that it teaches them the best Arts of Management under Sickness, and instructs them in the true Wisdom of Patience to bear their Lot with Contentment and Resignation. Human Nature, both as to outward Impressions and inward Sensations, may be the same, in *Good* and *Bad* Men; but Grace sweetens the Dispositions, and cools the Passions of the *One*, whilst Guilt adds a Pungency and Acuteness to Pain, and is the greatest Sting and Terror of a Disease, in the *Other*. View these two Persons upon the *Bed of Languishing*, and see the Difference of their Conduct and Deportment, according to the Variety of their Actions in their past Life. The *wicked Man* can neither look *backward* without Remorse, nor *forward* without Horror. All his Wishes are for a Recovery from Sickness, and all his Applications are for the stupifying of his Conscience, or the Removal of his bodily Tortures. But a Good Man surmounts his Disease by spiritual Contemplations, balances his present Pain by the comfort-

Sermon III. able Reflections upon a virtuous Life, and
fences against Futurity, by the Promises
of God and the Merits of his Redeemer.
And this brings me in the

Fifth Place, to consider how the
Contemplation of a good Life may
be the best Support to us at the *Hour*
of *Death*.

Those are very excellent and season-
able Petitions of our Church, *That, the*
more the outward Man decayeth, God would
strengthen us so much the more continually
with his Grace and holy Spirit in the inner
Man; and would not suffer us at our last
Hour, for any Pain of Death, to fall from
him: That his Almighty and over-ruling
Goodness would not permit the Violence
of a Distemper, or the Shocks of Death
to loosen our Hold, or break off our Al-
liance with God. This Scene, which is
antecedent to our Dissolution, is a very
shocking and melancholy Time indeed;
full of Hurry, Anguish, Astonishment,
and Confusion; the Flesh being then in a
particular Manner weak, and the Tempta-
tions, for any Thing we know, very
strong. The bare Pain of dying may not
be so much, as the fearful Looking for of
Judgment, and the Disposals of our better
Part in a future State. 'Tis Virtue only
can charge thro' these Dangers, and be
the strongest Security in our last Minutes.
If she has made Provision against the
Time of Need, and, by throwing in Stores
and Magazines, fortified the inward Man,
the

the Soul is in a ready Posture of Defence, Sermon
and can maintain her Ground in Defiance III.

of the Enemy. Those accidental Assistances which are administered to sick and depraved Minds by the Advice of their spiritual Pastors, or the charitable Prayers of the Church, are not of themselves sufficient, without any previous Dispositions, to carry a Man through the fiery Trial :

Like Seed sown upon stony Ground, for want Matt. iv. 5,
of Depth of Earth, they are soon scorched up, ^{7.}
and withered by the violent Heat of the Sun.

When Persecutions or Afflictions arise, wavering and uncertain Men are *immediately offended* : But when Virtue has by a long Exercise been cultivated and improved, rooted and habituated to the Soul, her Strength will be proportioned to any Danger, and the Succours of Grace will come timely in to the Assistances of weakened Nature.

Sixthly and lastly, From *Sickness* and *Death*, let us pass to the *Resurrection* and the *Day of Judgment* : And here I must beg your Patience, whilst I leave Mortality behind me, and bring my good Man in Idea to that Place, where he will speedily appear in Reality.

Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be Ps. xxiv. 7.
ye lift up, ye everlasting Doors ; and the
King of Glory shall come in. Who can view without Trembling, this solemn and majestick Entrance ? Who can bear the coming of his Judge *in the Clouds from* Matt. xxvi.
the right Hand of Power, without calling ^{64.}
upon

Sermon upon the Mountains to fall upon him, and
 III. the Hills to cover him? Who!

Luke xxiii.
 30.

— *Coram, quem quæritis, adsum.*

Wisdom v.
 1, 2.

W. 23

John iii. 20,
 21.

Mark the perfect Man, and behold the Upright: For he, he only has Courage to sustain this terrible Shock; he has Strength for this last Rencounter; he has Virtues to secure the Victory. There is nothing in Judgment can be dismal to him, who has the best Assurances and the most rational Satisfaction from himself. When the Trumpet shall sound, and the Judge appear; when the Book of Fate shall be open'd, and the Secrets of all Hearts disclos'd; then shall the righteous Man stand in great Boldness, before the Face of such as have afflicted him, and made no Account of his Labours. When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible Fear, and shall be amazed at the Strangeness of his Salvation, so far beyond all that they look'd for. When they cast up the Accounts of their own Sins, they shall come with Fear, and their own Iniquities shall convince them to their Face. But Piety shall appear with a different Aspect, and Innocence provoke the strictest Scrutiny and Inspection. Every one that doth Evil hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doth Truth, cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Now

Now, 'tis a future Judgment must place Things in a true Light, and adjust the Irregularities of this partial World; and then shall Religion creep from her Retirement, and private Charity be proclaimed before Men and Angels: Then shall Modesty be emboldened, and Humility exalted; Faith shall triumph, and Hope be swallow'd up in Fruition. Sermon III.

O happy Man, enter into the Joy of thy Lord, and dwell upon the Contemplation of thy Virtues to all Eternity! *We Fools* might have thy Fasting in Derision, and make thy Devotion a Proverb of Reproach: But how groundless were our Censures, and how ridiculous our Railery! *We Fools* accounted thy Life Madness, and thy End to be without Honour: But how art thou numbred among the Children of God, and thy Lot is among the Saints! For though the Righteous be prevented with Death; yet shall he be in Rest: For the Memorial of Virtue is immortal; because it is known with God, and with Men. When it is present, good Men will take Example at it; and when it is gone, they desire it: It weareth a Crown, and triumpheth for ever, having gotten the Victory, striving for undefiled Rewards.

O God, grant us such a Measure of thy Grace, as to pass the Time of our sojourning here with Fear, and to encounter the several Shocks of Sickness and Death with Patience and Religion;

Sermon tion; so that we may appear joyful at thy
 III. Tribunal, and be distinguish'd amongst
 the Number of thine Elect in the Kingdom of thy Son's Glory. *Amen.*

*Now to God the Father, the Son, and the
 Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Majesty,
 Might, and Glory, now, and for ever.
 Amen.*

The

*The Danger of Popularity; Or,
The Folly of Aiming at universal
Applause.*

A

SERMON

Preach'd at an

ORDINATION

IN THE

Cathedral Church of WELLS.

LUKE vi. 26.

*Wo unto you, when all Men shall speak
well of you: For so did their Fathers
to the false Prophets.*

THE Religion, which our Savi-
our came into the World to esta-
blish, being design'd to encoun-
ter with the Obstinacy of the *Jew* and
the Prejudice of the *Gentile*; it was ne-
cessary that the Teachers and Propaga-
tors of it should be rightly inform'd upon
what Footing they were to proceed, and
have

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have some previous Notice what Reception was to attend their *Doctrine*, and what Credit was to be given to their *Persons*, in the Discharge of their Ministry.

The *Redemption of Israel* was a very popular and delightful Theme, and the Reign of the *Messiah* created swelling and lofty Opinions, even in the Disciples themselves. To enjoy honourable Posts in this new Government, and to *sit one on the right Hand, and the other on the left in the Kingdom of Glory*, might not only be the Request of the *Mother of Zebedee's Children*, but might also lie at the Heart, and actuate the Expectation of all the Apostles. When our Saviour talk'd of *Sufferings and Death*, Peter presently enter'd his *Rebukes and Protestations*, and stomach'd the Disgrace and Inconsistency of such a Declaration. *Be it far from thee, Lord : This shall not be unto thee.* Heavens avert, that he whom we trusted should *redeem Israel*, and triumph over the usurping *Powers and Principalities* of this World; that He, whose Grandeur and Magnificence is so loftily described by all the *Prophets*, and whose Presence is to be ador'd by *Strangers* as well as his own *Countrymen* : Heavens (I say) avert, that this puissant Monarch should be the Subject of so much Ridicule and Infamy; and should be thrown out of his Dominions by those ungrateful Mortals he design'd to promote.

v. 23.

Now to Persons under such Pre-possessions and Mistakes, to Persons who *savour'd*

would not the Things that were of God, but those that were of Men, and whose Taste and Relish was turn'd only to tem- Sermon
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poral Enjoyments; it was necessary for our Saviour to give a truer Notion of his Kingdom, and to recommend and dignify that Contempt which would probably accompany the dispensing of Truth.

Wo unto you, when all Men shall speak well of you: For so did their Fathers to the false Prophets.

In discoursing upon these Words, I shall make it my Business,

FIRST, To consider how the *Wo* of being *spoken well of by all Men* is reconcileable with that *good Name* and *Character*, which, both by *Scripture* and *Reason*, we are encourag'd to endeavour after.

SECONDLY, To prove that an *universal Character* is impossible to be obtain'd in this World, by Men of *Principles* and *Conscience*.

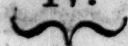
THIRDLY, To shew how those that stand fairest for the Applause of the Multitude, are *false Prophets*.

FOURTHLY, To enquire how *Ecclesiastical Persons* who must put their Character so often upon the Trial, are to behave themselves under Obloquy and Misrepresentation.

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FIRST, I am to consider how the *Wo* of being spoken well of by all Men, is reconcileable with that good Name and Character which, both by Scripture and Reason, we are encourag'd to endeavour after: For at the first hearing of this Censure of our Saviour, some People will be apt to cry out, How is this consistent with Solomon's Panegyrick upon Fame and Reputation?

Prov xxii,
1.

Is not a good Name rather to be chosen than great Riches, and loving Favour than Silver and Gold? Does not the same experienc'd Person prefer it to precious Ointment, and the Son of Sirach to Life it self? Have regard to thy Name: For that shall continue with thee above a thousand great Treasures of Gold. A good Life hath but few good Days; but a good Name endureth for ever.

Ecccl. vii. 1.
Eccclus. xli.
12, 13.

Now these, and such-like Encomiums (which do at first Sight seem to make it our Duty to endeavour after universal Credit and Applause,) will, upon further Enquiry, be found no Ways repugnant to the Reprehension of our Saviour, if we don't mistake a great for a good Name, but distinguish rightly between *Popularity* and *Reputation*, between *vain Glory* and *true Honour*.

The being well spoken of by all, which our Saviour censures, is that general Favour and Applause, which could only ensue to his *Disciples*, or any of their Successors, by modelling and framing themselves to the Customs and Practices of a wicked

Folly of aiming at universal Applause.

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wicked World ; which *general Applause* it was impossible for those Persons ever to obtain, who were to set up for Plain-dealers with Mankind, and Reformers of the Age they liv'd in ; and so were more likely to incur the Displeasure of the Obstinate and Superstitious, by encountering their Vices, than to purchase their Favour by a blunt and impartial Delivery of the Truth.

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But the *good Name*, which Solomon recommends, is the Character of *good and virtuous Persons*, and the Foundation of this, is the Performance of *good and virtuous Actions*. Vice and unlawful Compliances have no Hand in the *Establishment* of Reputation, notwithstanding their *Numbers* and *Interest* in the World : Noise and Acclamation have nothing to do with *true Fame* ; and we are no more to form our Judgment of Mankind upon Rumours and Reports, than to justify Conquest and Usurpation from the Actions of *Alexander* and *Cæsar*, or to think that *Corah* and his Accomplices (who are styl'd *famous in their Congregation, and Men of Renown*) are the truest Assertors of Liberty, and Patterns of Fortitude. *Goodness* and *Greatness* are at as vast a Distance as *History* and *Romance*, as *Courage* and *Fool-Hardiness* : And doubtless there are Men, who have laid the surest Foundation for a *good Name*, that never sounded the Trumpet upon the House-Top, nor have done their Alms to be seen of the Multitude : But their Deportment has been modest, and their Cha-

Numb.
xvi. 2.

F

city

Sermon rity secret ; and their generous Actions
 IV. may be applauded only by an omniscient
 God, a good Conscience, and a necessitous Neighbourhood.

SECONDLY, I am to shew how an *universal Character* is impossible to be obtain'd in this World, by Men of *Principles* and *Conscience*.

Now the Truth of this will appear,

First, From the many *Infirmities* incident to Mankind.

Secondly, From the *Prevalency of Vice* in those that are to judge of our Character.

Thirdly, From the *Deficiency* of their *Knowledge*.

Fourthly, From the *Variety* of their *Tempers*.

Fifthly, From the *Misrepresentations* of *Envy* and *Malice*.

First, Our own *Infirmities* are sufficient to hinder us from an *universal Character*.

As we are all of us composed of *Flesh* and *Blood*, and subject to the *Depravity* of fallen Nature ; so we are encompassed with *Passions*, *Prejudices*, and *Errors* ; and it is morally impossible but that in our *Business* and *Conversation* with the World, some of these *Failings* should be observed and animadverted upon by others ; and when they have passed thro' different Hands, and been comment-
 ed

ed upon by Variety of Tongues, they will be soon magnified and augmented, soon sullied and stained with Infamy and Disgrace. Sermon IV.

— *Vires acquirit eundo.*

Virg. *Æn.*
lib. 4.

Scandal is never diminished by Carriage; but it grows by rolling, and gathers Strength from the Multitude. From a Report it commences Fact, and from a secret Whisper is presently mounted into a public Infamy: An Infirmity is swelled into a Presumption, and a Passion into premeditated Malice; a slight Prejudice passes for Obstinacy, and a Mistake for affected Ignorance.

Now, unless mortal Men could put off their Natures, and become Angels, it is impossible for them in many Things not to offend all; and their Offences being likely to be propagated and magnified in the fore-mentioned Manner, it is equally impossible also that their Characters and Persons should not be freely handled in a licentious World.

Secondly, The Generality of those Persons, we must converse with, are vicious, and so not willing to give us this untainted Character.

Tho' we are to be cautious in the Choice of our Companions, yet our Employments and Occupations will frequently engage us in a mixt Multitude; and we must either totally relinquish human Society, or upon some Occasions con-

Sermon verse with Fornicators, Covetous, Extortion-
ers, and Idolators.

IV.

1 Cor. v. 10

1 Cor. xiii.
5, 7.

Now tho' the Foundation of Applause ought in the first Place to be laid by our selves, yet the Propagation of it must be owing to others; and how can we expect that *all* the World should *speak well* of our Virtues, when such a Recommendation must upbraid their own Practices, and fix Guilt and Infamy upon their beloved selves. Vice is always retained by the contrary Faction, and can no more come into the Measures of Virtue, than *Light* be incorporated with *Darkness*, or *Christ* associated with *Belial*. 'Tis *Charity that thinketh no Evil, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things*: But *Vice* is both *Infidel* and *Apostate*, and instead of making any favourable Allowances for a *seeming Evil*, blasts and discredits the most *apparent Good*. She sucks in Rumours, and encourages Suspicions; takes Things by the wrong Handle, and gives an odd Turn to the most plausible Appearances. She is prejudiced in her Opinions, byas'd in her Judgment, partial in her Reports, and rash in her Censures.

Now under such a Judge, I need not tell you, how an honest Man is like to suffer; and yet if he stands upon an universal Character, the *vicious Multitude*, as well as the *few Good*, must be called in to give their *Verdict*.

Thirdly, Another Obstacle to general Applause is *Defect of Judgment* in those that are to applaud us. It

It is not every one that is acquainted with an Action, or capable of determining what is Praise-worthy and virtuous; and yet such ignorant People are the most forward to *Tattle* and give Characters, and to supply in *Tongue* what they want in *Intellects*.

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Others there are who are taken with *Shew* and *Parade*, and can think nothing good and substantial but what is gaudy and glittering. *Tinsel* with them is as valuable as *Sterling*; *Noise* makes a greater Impression than *Sense*; *Impudence* is preferable to *Learning*, and *Hypocrisy* passes for a truer Mark of Sanctity, than *Devotion*.

To all this it may be added, that Craft goes a great way towards the imposing upon Mankind, and has ten thousand Engines and Stratagems at work to blind the Eyes and pervert the Judgment of Spectators, and by this Means to advance Error to the Discredit of *Truth*, and to Dignify an *Impostor* to the Prejudice of a *Saint*.

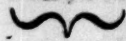
As long therefore as *Ignorance*, *Design*, and *Laziness* remain in the World, there will be no true Judgment or Characters of Men, nor any just and established Encomium of all their good Qualities and Virtues.

Fourthly, I am to consider the Difference of Mens Tempers, as an Obstacle to an universal Reputation.

Mens Passions and Inclinations are as various and as contrary as the Shape of their Bodies, and the Complexion of their

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Faces ; and you may as well add to their Statures and proportion their Sizes, as adjust their Tempers and unite their Sentiments. Should the Multitude fall into Harmony and Consent, I should think the Winds had no Power over the Sea, and that Calms will ensue in spite of Hurricanes and Tempests. It is seldom known that a Matter of an indifferent Nature is proposed in a mix'd Company, but that Disputes and Controversies will arise : And how much more Dissention must we suppose to ensue when Fame and Reputation are the Subject of Debate, and the Commission of Good or Evil stand for our Decision. *Part will hold with one Side, and part with another, and the Multitude must be divided.* Some will be for *Paul*, and some for *Apollos* ; and, perhaps, in the Heat of the Canvas, the Virtues of both may be lessen'd and obscur'd. We are, all of us, *Men of like Passions*, and too apt, God knows, to cherish and indulge Diversity of Opinions. Disputes arose even amongst the Apostles themselves ; and the Contention was so sharp between *Paul* and *Barnabas*, as to occasion a total Separation. The Ties of Friendship are liable to be broken, and the most intimate Acquaintance commence the most deadly Enemies. A slighted Lover reveals the Secrets of his Mistress, and triumphs in Favours he never enjoy'd. Chastity her self must pass for a Strumpet, Meekness for Cowardice, Zeal for Obstinacy, and every Thing, in short,

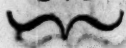
Folly of aiming at universal Applause. 71

short, be branded with an ill Name, Sermon
which does not quadrate with the hu- IV.
mourfome Temper of every Body.

Fifthly. A great Incentive to these various Tempers and Passions of Mankind, are the Misrepresentations of Envy and Malice, which have the most fatal Influence upon a *good Name*. For these Vices seem more immediately hatch'd in Hell, and to have all the ugly Features and Lineaments of the old Serpent, that *false Accuser* and Calumniator of the Brethren. From Spite and Rancour proceed Calumny, Slander, Whispering, Lying, Defamation, Backbiting, Reviling, and the rest: And what Havock and Devastation must this Army of Robbers commit, when they are quartered in the Territories of Virtue, and prey upon unguarded Innocence?

Where is the Piety that can stand invulnerable against the Darts and *Arrows of bitter Words*? Where is the Reputation which can escape the *Fire* that is kindled in *Hell*, and continually fann'd and blown up by Furies? And, above all, where is the Arm that can evade the Blows which are given in the *Dark*, and encounter with the *Pestilence which flieth by Night*, and killeth in secret?

THIRDLY, I am to shew how those who stand fairest for the Applause of the Multitude are the *false Prophets*: And that for these three Reasons;



The Danger of Popularity ; or,

First, Because they can conform to all Times and Humours.

Secondly, Advance or oppose any Doctrines.

Thirdly, Complement or flatter any Persons.

First, False Prophets may more commonly be *spoken well* of, because they can conform to all Times and Humours. They have no Restraints upon them like other Men; no Principles to controul their Actions; no Conscience to curb their Ambition. The Motives of their Proceedings are not the Honour of their Master, the Establishment of Truth, and the Information of their Brethren; but the Ease of themselves, the securing of an Interest, and the Gratification of their Pride. If these Ends are serv'd, it is no Odds to them, whether Truth or Error be uppermost; whether Regularity or Confusion be introduc'd amongst Men; whether Inheritance or Usurpation obtain in the Kingdoms of the Earth. For all Government to them has an equal Pretence to a divine Right, and all Governors are lifted into the Throne by the

Jer. v. 31.

Hand of Providence. Thus the *Prophets prophesy falsely, and the Priests bear Rule by their Means, and my People love to have it so.* They love, indeed, these rotten Casuists, and are never wanting in some extravagant Returns of Praise to such Persons as have either sooth'd their Ambition, or justify'd their Proceedings.

Secondly,

Secondly, Another Method *false Pro-* Sermon
phets have to ingratiate themselves into IV.
the Generality of the People, is by ad-
vancing or opposing any Doctrine.

True Prophets are ty'd down by Laws,
and aw'd by Revelation; and the Rule
is, *The Word that the Lord putteth into my* Num. xxii.
Mouth, that will I speak: For if thou wilt 18, 38,
give me this House full of Silver and Gold, I 1 Kings
cannot go beyond the Word of the Lord my xxii. 14.
God, to do less or more.

But Impostors are under no such Re-
straints, neither have they the least Re-
gard for the Dictates of Reason, or the
Suggestions of the Spirit. They can cry
down Good, or magnify Evil, dignify
Falshood, or degrade Truth, as it best
suits the Inclinations of their Superiors,
and advances the Interest of themselves:
And, doubtless, such Men must find their
Accounts answer'd by these pleasing Do-
ctrines, and very high Characters given
of that Wisdom which is so complaisant
and popular.

Should a *false Prophet* in our Days at-
tack the Doctrine of *Repentance*, and ju-
stify the vicious Life of a great Man from
two or three grave Sayings on his *Death-*
bed; there is no Question but such a Ca-
suisit would be celebrated and extoll'd by
all that had any Interest or Dependence
on the Deceased.

Should *Another* stickle for *Resistance* and
the *deposing of Kings*, (as that Doctrine
grew necessary and fashionable,) how would
Rebels and *Republicans* magnify and di-
stinguish

Sermon stinguish his sound Reasoning, and applaud
IV. his peculiar Talents in Controversy?

Should a *Third* make some Difficulties about the *Trinity*, and be dissatisfy'd in *Revelation*? What a glorious *Divine* must this Man pass for amongst *Deists* and *Socinians*? What Monuments would be rais'd to his Parts by *Libertines* and *Free-thinkers*?

In short, whatever Doctrine is in Vogue, if the *Prophet* can be so fortunate to espouse it; whatever Doctrine is in Disgrace, if he can be so complaisant as to oppose it; there is no doubt, but those who have an Interest either in maintaining or exploding these Doctrines, will think no Praise or Honours sufficient to recompence the Service of their Advocate.

O celebrated Names are ye! O successful and renown'd Champions! who can prophesy smooth Things, and be pliant and conformable to all Men: who can tack with every Wind, and steer with every Tide: who can call Evil Good, and Good Evil; put Darknefs for Light, and Light for Darknefs; Bitter for Sweet, and Sweet for Bitter! — But,

II. v. 30.

I Kings
xxii. 13.

Thirdly, It is not only Doctrines must be espous'd, but Persons must be flatter'd to advance the Renown of a false Prophet. Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, and prosper, (say all the false Prophets to Ahab) for the Lord shall deliver it into the King's Hand. Go, and prosper, is an endearing Salutation; Success and Victory are enchanting Sounds.

Folly of aiming at universal Applause. 75

Sounds. *How beautiful are the Feet of those that can bring good Tidings ? How happy the Lips, which are always commission'd to speak on the favourable Side ?* Sermon IV.

Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit. Terent. And.

An oily Tongue shall procure Praise, and the most popular Oratory is what gives the least Offence. *I hate this Man, because he doth not prophesy Good concerning me, but Evil ; but I love Another, because he consults my Interest, and acts according to my Inclinations.* Kings xxii. 9.

Ye shall neither see the Sword, nor the Famine, but enjoy assured Peace in this Place, is the applauded Language of Deceivers. Your Undertakings are just and honourable, cries the Time-server ; and Heaven must sanctify the Motions which his own Spirit has rais'd in the Breast of you his chosen. Jer. xiv. 13.

O glorious Counsel ! O profound Causticity ! The Head of the Monarch grows giddy with this Infatuation, and the People run mad with approaching Happiness. This welcome Prediction must of Necessity be from God, and the Person must be the Favourite of Heaven, who reveals the Secret !

Such is the Success of giving *flattering Titles* to the Mighty, and of having *Mens Persons in Admiration for the sake of Gain !* Such is the Applause of artful Daubing, and such the Consequence of *sewing Pillows to all Arm-holes.*

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FOURTHLY, I am to enquire how Ecclesiastical Persons, who must put their Character so often upon the Trial, are to behave themselves under Obloquy and Misrepresentation.

The Foundation of this Enquiry is the Direction of our Saviour's Address to the Disciples in particular, who were not only the *Preachers of Righteousness* themselves, but the *Representatives* of their *Successors*; and whatever was apply'd to *them* relating to their Function, might have an Eye to Posterity, and be instructive to the Governors and Ministers of the Church.

Now since a general Character is so difficult to be obtain'd even by inspir'd Persons, and since Fame and Popularity are more commonly the Portion of *False* than of *True* Prophets; it seems to be the Duty of a good Man not to be so solicitous about Applause and Commendation, as the doing of those Things which are Praiseworthy and commendable:

In order thereto, they are

First, To square their Actions by the Rules of their holy Profession. For by this Means, they will have the same Compass to steer by, and all their Proceedings will be uniform and regular. There will be no deviating thro' Ignorance, nor warping for Fear; no Additions to please some, nor any Concealments for the Fear of Others. Uprightness and Integrity will be the Support of their Consciences, whatever may be

be the Event as to Reputation; and a Sermon Declaration like St. Paul's at Miletus, will be more comfortable and assistant than all the frothy Applause and noisy Acclamations of this World; I take you to record *Acts xx. 20, 26, 27.* *this Day, that I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you, and have not shunned to declare unto you all the Counsel of God.*

Secondly, Let Ecclesiastical Persons, in spite of Defamation, make the Glory of God and the Interest of the Church the principal Aim of their Function. For Persons that have dedicated themselves to God, have more eminently renounc'd the World, and deny'd themselves; and why should they expect Applause from the Multitude, and Reverence by their Compliances? *Marvel not, my Brethren, (says St. John) if the World hate you. It hated me (says our Saviour) before it hated you; and the Enmity is like to continue as long as worldly Pretensions are discourag'd, Truth is maintain'd, and Christianity extoll'd by you.*

Thirdly, Such Persons as are unjustly censur'd in this World, must expect their Reward from their great Master in another: 'Tis his Service they are engag'd in, and for his sake that they are often ridicul'd; and who can suppose that a righteous and compassionate God should be unmindful of their Labour, or forgetful of their Sufferings? The World may be blind and erroneous; ignorant of our Proceedings, prejudic'd against our Persons, and envious at our Virtues. But God, who knows
our

Sermon
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our Hearts, will accept of our Sincerity, and give Allowance for our Infirmities: By this indulgent Master it is a Pleasure to be survey'd; to his Tribunal, 'tis a Happiness to appeal from the Calumnies and Aspersions of a wicked World: Here will be no Parties or Cabals form'd against us; no Power or Interest to misrepresent our Actions; no stern Looks or frowning Countenances to intimidate our Meekness and Innocence.

I have now run through the Particulars which I propos'd to insist upon from the Text, and I shall beg Leave to close up all with two or three practical Inferences from what has been said.

First, I infer the Vanity of Popularity. *Man in Honour abideth not, but is like to the Beasts that perish.* His Titles are precarious, his Person is mortal, and his Glory will be soon laid in the Dust. Credit and Applause are very dangerous to be sought after, difficult to be obtain'd, uncertain to be kept, and easy to be forfeited; and what Man can be so stupid to sacrifice his Liberty to the Humour of the Rabble, or force his Religion to truckle to his Vanity?

When we have done our utmost to be renown'd and popular, some ill-natur'd Faction may be a Thorn in our Side, some rude and boisterous Tongue may bespatter or eclipse our Glory. You have heard enough already, how they who would be *spoken well of by All*, must conform and comply with *All*; and of what Nature these

Compli-

Compliances must be, I need not now in- Sermon
form you. I would only beg Leave to IV.
remind those who are in the Pursuit of
Honour, and Courting and Cringing to the
Populace, that no Purchase of Fame can
compensate for the Loss of Conscience:
No Titles and Distinctions for the aban-
doning of Morality and Principles.

Secondly, We should be suspicious of
our selves under Praise. For if a *Woe* is
to attend them whom *all Men shall speak*
well of, how diligent and watchful should
we be, in all our Steps and Approaches
towards this universal Character? In-
stead of being bloated with Fame, and
proud of Exaltation, we should consider
how we come to deserve it, and by what
Tenure we hold this gaudy Blessing.
What Evil have I done (says the Philoso-
pher) *that these Miscreants should speak*
well of me? And how more becoming a
Christian would it be, upon every Acces-
sion of Grandeur and Respect, to ask
himself seriously, what Breaches have I
made upon Virtue, and what Terms have
I given to Vice? What Overtures are on
foot for an Accommodation, and what
Concessions have been propos'd to the
Enemy, that those should commence my
Advocates and Admirers, who have been
always noted for no extraordinary Af-
fection to my Person or Profession?

It is very suspicious, that a Man is
halting or wavering, when a *Schismatic*
shall commend his *Conformity*, and an *In-*
fidel his *Faith*; and in such Cases he would
do

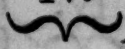
Sermon do well to examine into this Amity and
 IV. Friendship, and to see upon what Prin-
 ciples it can be supported and maintain'd.

Thirdly, From what has been said about the Impossibility of an universal Character, I would suggest to you the Comfort ye may receive under some sort of Disgrace. Truth it self may be *evil-spoken* of, and Innocence ridicul'd: And where is the Man, who would not triumph in the Injury, if his God did acquit, and his Conscience applaud his Proceedings? The Satisfaction of having *done well* is lasting and durable; a Stay and Support to the Mind, when the *Hosannas* and Acclamations of the Multitude are vanish'd, and their popular Idol is left to the Stings and Remorses of a distracted Conscience. What, alas! are the Talks and Rumours of the World to the Nature of *Good and Evil*? What is the Parade and Ostentation of the *outward Man* to that Peace and Serenity which ought to strengthen and refresh the Soul from *within*? The *Founder of our Faith* went thro' little else but Indignities and Blasphemies; the *Apostles* were accounted the *Filth and Off-scouring of the Earth*, and Christianity it self *was every where spoken against*: And yet, I hope, we are not to chime in with these Defamations; we are not to ridicule the Apostolic Office; nor to account the *Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing*. We are to look back with Pleasure upon an handful of Men, in the Infancy of the Church, struggling

1 Cor. iv.
13.

Folly of aiming at universal Applause. 81

ling against Prejudice and Malice, and Sermon
advancing Truth amidst the Threats and IV.

Infirmities of a misguided World: And 

by their Example, *we are not to fear the* 1c. li. 7.

*Reproach of Men, neither to be afraid of
their Revilings*; but to account it an Ho-
nour to be disgrac'd for the Truth, and
when we *suffer wrongfully* (as well in our
Reputation as our *Goods*) to bear the Loss
with Patience, and wait for a Reparation
with Joy and Assurance.

Fourthly and lastly, Let us take Care of
avoiding all Resemblance to the *false Pro-
phets*. — Praise, we know, is very bewitch-
ing, and Honour is extreamly agreeable to
the Pride and Vanity of our Nature; so that
Prudence and Wisdom must timely inter-
pose, or else a Man's Brain may be seiz'd,
and his Head turn'd, before he is aware.
*Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed
lest he fall.* Keep at a Distance from the
Temptation, if ye would be secure of
your Virtues: *Stop your Ears against the
Voice of the Charmer*, if ye would not be
seduc'd by the Voice of the *Syren*, and led
to Destruction by the Magic of Sounds.
Men may think that it is very innocent
to make some Concessions; not consider-
ing that Vice gains Ground by little and
little, and improves every Halt of Vir-
tue to her own Advantage. She first takes
a Liberty in *Things indifferent*, then nib-
bles at what is *lawful*, and at last creeps
into the very Bowels of Religion, and
preys upon her Vitals.

Sermon Be ye, therefore, prudent and watch-
 IV. ful: *Quit your selves like Men, and be strong.*
 Consider the Distance between Virtue and
 Vice, between *true Prophets* and *false*;
 and don't think to please all Parties by
 jumbling up a medly Alliance, nor to ac-
 quire the Character of *Healing* and *Mode-*
rate Men, by any popular and ungodly
 Union with your Enemies. 'Tis Prin-
 ciple as well as Practice, Zeal as well as
 Condescension, which are requir'd by our
 great Master; and whoever wou'd please
 Men by lessening the Extent, or receding
 from the Obligation of any Duty, betrays
 his Trust, and acts contrary to the Dignity
 of his Station.

Lord! grant that the Orthodoxy of
 our Faith, and the Regularity of our
 Behaviour may recommend us to thy Fa-
 vour; and that however we may be spot-
 ted in our Characters, and misrepresented
 in the Discharge of our Ministry, we may
 be justify'd at thy Tribunal, and rewarded
 by the *High Priest* of our Profession in the
 Kingdom of Glory. *Amen.*

The Terrors of Guilt.

IN TWO

SERMONS

Preach'd in the

Cathedral Church at WELLS.

ACTS xxiv. 25.

*And as he reasoned of Righteousness,
Temperance, and Judgment to come,
Felix trembled, and answered, Go
thy Way for this Time, and when I
have a convenient Season, I will
call for thee.*

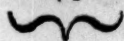
ST. Paul being apprehended at *Ye-* Sermon
rusalem, and delivered to the Civil V.
Magistrate for Punishment, we find
him, in the former Part of this Chapter,
making his Defence before *Felix*, the Ro-
man Procurator, and vindicating his Re-
putation against those foul and notorious
Crimes which were alledg'd against him.

G 2

The

Sermon

V.



The Mouth of his Accusers, was *one Tertullus an Orator*, who, by a fulsome and flattering Speech, endeavour'd first to insinuate himself into the Affections of a vain-glorious Judge, and afterwards to blacken and *libel* the Prisoner for *Faction* and *Sedition* in the *State*, as well as *Here-sy* and *Schism* in the *Church*.

To wipe off these Aspersions, and represent true Matter of Fact to the Governor, it was necessary for the Apostle, when he was *permitted to speak* in his own Behalf, to give some Account both of his *Behaviour*, and his *Doctrine*.

Acts xxiv.
14

As to his *Behaviour*, he flatly denies himself to have any Hand in Tumults and Commotions, either in the *City* or the *Temple*: But as to his *Doctrine*, he as frankly confesses, *That after the Way which they were pleased to call Here-sy, so did he worship the God of his Fathers, believing all Things which are written in the Law and the Prophets.*

After these and some other Proofs of St. Paul's Innocency, *Felix* dismiss'd the Assembly, under a Colour that some material Witnesses were wanting, who would speedily appear, and give greater Light to the Subject in Debate.

Within the Space of a few Days, *Felix* order'd a re-hearing of the Trial, and permitted *Drusilla, his Wife*, to be present, who being a *Jerusalem*, might be a more competent Judge of the controverted Points between her own Countrymen and the *Christians*, than her Husband a *Pagan*, possibly could be.

Upon

Upon producing the Prisoner a second Sermon Time, *Felix* demanded some Account of that Doctrine which had occasioned the present Prosecution, and raised such an Uproar thro' all the Territories of *Judea*: And when *St. Paul* had obtain'd the Liberty of Speech, he did not tickle the Vanity of the Governor, as *Tertullus* had done before, but boldly singled out three main Points of the Christian Religion to insist upon, which could not be very grateful to such a notorious Sinner as *Felix* was.

For as he reasoned of *Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come*, *Felix* trembled, and answered, *Go thy Way for this Time, and when I have a convenient Season, I will call for thee.*

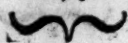
In treating upon these Words, I shall beg Leave

FIRST, To consider that argumentative and rational Way, in which *St. Paul* thought fit to convey his present Discourse; *He reasoned.*

SECONDLY, To give some Account of those three Topics, upon which his Arguments or Reasonings proceeded; viz. *Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come.*

THIRDLY, To produce some Reasons, why *St. Paul* might at this Time, and before these Persons so

Sermon
V.



particularly insist upon the fore-mentioned Subjects.

FOURTHLY, To justify the Fiteness of such a Discourse before this Audience.

FIFTHLY, To represent the Effect it had upon a debauch'd Felix; *He trembled.*

SIXTHLY, To shew how wicked Men may tremble upon the hearing of their Sins, although they don't sincerely repent of them.

SEVENTHLY, To point out the Uneasiness of guilty Persons when they are tax'd for their Sins, and what Methods they use to evade Reproofs; and this is intimated to us in these Words, *Go thy Way for this Time.*

EIGHTHLY, To lay before you the Artifices of Men in deferring a necessary Duty, under a Pretence of a fitter Opportunity to do it in; *when I have a convenient Season, I will call for thee.*

FIRST, I am to consider that argumentative and rational Way, in which St. Paul thought fit to convey his present Discourse; *He reason'd.*

This

This was a Method very customary Sermon with our Apostle, who by the Depth of his Learning and the Strength of his natural Parts, was most admirably fitted both for a *Casuiſt* and a *Pleader*; and who uſed all the Cloſeneſs of a *Diſputant* as well as the Perſuaſion of an *Orator*, to influence and convert his Auditors. Inſtead of appealing to Omnipotence for the immediate Deciſion of a Controverſy, and bearing down the Scruples of his Hearers by the Dint and Force of a Miracle, he frequently applies himſelf to their Underſtandings, and courts their Aſſent by the milder Proofs and Convictions of Reason. In this Reſpect, he was the better qualified to be an *Apoſtle of the Gentiles* (thoſe ſmart and accurate Diſputants!) who had made *Wiſdom* their boated Study, and who gloried ſo highly in their elaborate Searches after *Truth* and *Virtue*.

In his Diſputes with the *Philophers at Athens*, he attacks thoſe Maſters of Science with their own Weapons, and by a clear Thread of Reasoning, back'd with Citations from the *Greek Poets*, refutes their Superſtition towards an *unknown God*, and turns them to the Knowledge and Adoration of the *true One*.

With the *Jews*, his Manner was to rea- Acts xvii.
ſon out of the *Scriptures*, Deducing and 1.
Inſerring the *Chriſtian Doctrine*, Opening
and *Alledging*, that *Chriſt* muſt needs have
ſuffered, and riſen again from the *Dead* :
And that this *Jeſus* whom he preached unto
G 4 them,

Sermon *them, was Christ*: Yet he was so far
 V. from demanding an implicit Obedience to
 his Doctrine, that he extolled the *Bere-*
ans for sifting into his Principles, and
 v. 11. trying his Doctrine by the Touch-stone
 of Revelation.

This was St. *Paul's* Method of converting the World by Reason and Argument; and whoever requires farther Proof of his Abilities this Way, may peruse his *E-*
pistles to the *Romans* and the *Hebrews*: In the *former* of which, he will discover the finest Talent of Reasoning in his accurate Discourses upon *Grace* and *Justifica-*
tion; and in the *latter* he must admire the Firmness of those *Principles* he advances, and the Cogency of those *Con-*
clusions he draws, concerning the Eternity of Christ's Priesthood, and the Perpetuity of the Gospel-Dispensation.

In the Case before us, we find our Great Apostle applying himself to a Mixture of *Jews* and *Heathens*; and therefore wisely fetching his Arguments from the Obligation of moral Honesty, as well as the Certainty of divine Revelation, to convince and persuade both these opposite Parties.

To give some farther Light to his Proceedings, it may be proper to look into the subject Matter of his present Discourse, as well as the rational and powerful Manner of his handling it.

SECONDLY, Then, Let us proceed to give some Account of those
 three

three Topics upon which St. Paul's Arguments or Reasonings were grounded; viz. *Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come.* And what induces me to this Undertaking, is the different Acceptations which are applied to these general Terms in Scripture, and the Necessity I lie under of fixing their particular Meanings, that I may more fully discover the Drift and Cogency of the Apostle's Discourse in Reference to his present Audience.

As for *Righteousness*, it is a Word of such a large Extent as to comprehend all moral Duties, and to take in the whole Sum of our Religion in Respect of God and our Neighbour: But in this Place, the Notion is to be restrained, and the Signification to reach no farther than *Justice between Man and Man*, which is but a Species of this *universal Righteousness*.

As for *Temperance*, That too oftentimes admits of a larger Interpretation, and takes in the whole Compass of that Virtue, which lays a Restraint upon the Desires and Appetites of Mankind. And for as much as *Honours, Riches, and Pleasures* are those Temptations and Amusements which commonly draw the Eyes and Affections of the World after them, *Temperance* must be always employed to restrain our Thirst, and curb our Inclinations in Pursuit of these bewitching Objects.

But

Sermon

V.



But *Temperance*, in its most common Acceptation, is particularly conversant in regulating our Desires, as to the Enjoyment of sensual Pleasures: And it either respects the Use of *Meat and Drink* for the Refreshment of Nature and the common Support of Life, or the keeping both of Soul and Body free and pure from all the Stains and Defilements of *Lust* and *Concupiscence*. In this latter Branch, it is commonly known by the Name of *Chastity*; and I take it that *St. Paul's* Discourse in the Text, did particularly proceed upon *this Virtue*, as well as the fore-mentioned one of *distributive Justice*.

The last Topic which the Apostle enlarged upon, was a *future Judgment*, which might seem new and surprizing to a *Pagan Governor*, because the *Resurrection of the Body*, and the unfolding of all the minute Passages of Life at this general Tribunal, was not so fully discovered even by those who believed the Immortality of the Soul, and the Certainty of Rewards and Punishments in another State.

THIRDLY, I am to suggest some Reasons why *St. Paul* made Choice of *Justice, Chastity*, and a *future Judgment* for the Matter of his Discourse, before *Felix* and *Drusilla*.

I am apt to believe that the Apostle was determin'd in the main Topics of his Discourse, that he might put the Governor

governor and his pretended Wife in Mind Sermon
of their incontinent Living, and some V.
other abominable Practices in the Admin-
istration of public Affairs. For *Felix* is
represented by *Historians* as a wanton
Debauchee, a loose Liver, a corrupted
Judge, and a tyrannical Governor.

For the Proof of so much of his Cha-
racter as relates to the Abuse of Justice,
be pleased to take the Words of a Ro-
man Author, who tells us that, *Per om-
nem scvitiam & libidinem, jus regium ser-* Tacitus
vili imperio exercuit. For a farther Con-
firmation of his Villanies, you may con-
sult the Verses following my Text, where
we read, *That he hop'd Money should have* Acts xxiv.
been given him of Paul, that he might loose 26, 27.
*him: Wherefore he sent for him the oftner,
and communed with him.* And when he
found at last, that his Expectations of
Bribery were defeated, he did, upon the
Promotion of *Portius Festus* to his Place,
leave this innocent Person in Fetters, to
ingratiate himself into the Favour of the
Jews.

As to the other Part of the Governor's
Crime, which relates to the Breach of
Chastity, this also sufficiently appears by
the Marriage of *Drusilla*, who (accord-
ing to *Josephus's Antiquities* of his own
Nation) was the Wife of King *Axizus*,
and was wrought upon by the Persuasion
of one *Simon* a Jew, to relinquish her
Husband, and comply with the wanton
Proposals of *Felix*: And upon this Ac-
count, the Historian gives the Lady this
foul

Sermon foul Character, which I must beg Leave
V. to recite in his own Words, as very ap-

posite to my present Purpose *, ἡ δὲ κα-
κῶς πράττουσα, καὶ φυεῖν ἐκ τῆς ἀδελφῆς Βερνίκης
βυλομένη φθόνον, διὰ γὰρ τὸ κάλλος ἐν ἑκ ὁλίγοις
ἐβλάπτετο, παραλῖναι τὰς παῖδας νόμιμα πείθι-
ται, καὶ τῷ φηλικὶ γήμασθαι.

From all this, it is highly pro-
bable, That St. Paul designedly pitch'd
upon the two great Virtues of *Justice*
and *Chastity*, that he might reprimand
Felix who committed all the Acts of Vi-
olence and Oppression in the Government of
Judea, and to compleat his Character
had forc'd himself into another Man's
Bed, and violated all the sacred Bonds
and Ties of Wedlock: And that our
Apostle might add a greater Weight to
his Argument, he presses it from the
Consideration of a future Judgment, when
God will be sure to take Vengeance on
all Tyrants and Oppressors, and particu-
larly to judge *Whoremongers* and *Adulter-
ers*, and allot them their Punishment
with the Devil and his Angels.

FOURTHLY, I am to justify the
Fitness of this Discourse of St. Paul for
the Audience it was address'd to.

It is an Observation of our great † *British*
Preacher, "That general Persuasives to
"Repentance, and Invectives against Sin
"at large, do not immediately tend to

* Joseph. Ant. Jud. lib. 20. c. 6. p. 891. Edit. Hudf.

† Arch-bishop Tillotson's Sermon of Evil Speaking.

“ reform the Lives of Men, because they
“ fall among the Croud, but do not
“ touch the Consciences of particular
“ Persons in so sensible and awakening a
“ Manner, as when we treat of particu-
“ lar Duties and Sins, and endeavour to
“ put Men upon the Practice of the One,
“ and to reclaim them from the Other,
“ by proper Arguments taken from the
“ Nature of particular Virtues and
“ Vices.”

The *General Way* of Instruction is like an ingenious Harangue of a *Physician* upon the Advantage of Health and the Misery of Diseases: The *Particular One* is like a Consultation concerning the Nature of the Patient's Constitution, and an Application of Medicine to his proper Distempers.

St. *Paul* proceeded in the latter and more effectual Way with *Felix*, and thro' the whole Series of his Discourse, every Auditor might have said to the Governor, *Thou art the Man*. This, indeed, was a frank and blunt Method of Dealing; but it was what became the Integrity and Resolution of an Apostle, and suited with the Plainness and Impartiality of the Gospel.

I know that if a Preacher in our Days, touches upon any fashionable Vices, he is, in the Language of the Times, stiled a *Bigot* and a *Party-man*, and Abundance of hard Words are bestowed upon him for his Insolence to his Superiors, and his

Sermon his Undutifulness to Government: But
 V. still we would intreat these angry Zealots
 to consider, that there is a Difference between Argument and Railery, between naming of Persons and exposing of Vices. If Men will be the Associates and Partisans of Sin, they must not accuse the Insolence and Partiality of their *Monitor*, for his *Encomiums* on Virtue; neither must they fume and hector about *Personal Reflections*, if the Arrow should sometimes glance upon the tender Part, and rip up the Sore of the most infected Member.

If we were only to preach such Truths as are pleasing to Men, and to suppress those which the Generality of the World have violated, what would become of the Injunctions, *Cry aloud, and spare not; be instant in Season, and out of Season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine?* And what a Rapsody of Libels and Lampoons would all the free Discourses of the Apostles and primitive Fathers pass for?

Upon this Scheme also, *St. Paul* was to be blam'd for *preaching Felix* into Agonies and Convulsions, and his Harangue unseasonable of *Righteousness* and *Chastity*, when he saw Innocence arraign'd in his own Person, and a Strumpet caress'd in a Court of Justice.

But let us, in Spite of Temporizers and Flatterers, stick to the zealous Example of our Apostle, and conclude from
 this

this Transaction, That Courage, Resolution, and Impartiality are necessary for the Discharge of the Pastoral Office, and that neither the Riches, the Station, or Authority of our Superiors, are to screen them from the Reproofs of the Pulpit. But still I must confess, that where Duty and Power seem to clash, it is much to be wish'd and pray'd for, that the *Man of God* would not, on the one Hand, have the Persons of the Mighty in *Admiration for the Sake of Gain*, and the Dread of *Punishment*; nor, on the other, exert his Function to the gratifying of his Pride, and the trampling upon the Honours and Dignities of his Superiors.

FIFTHLY, I am to consider the Effects which *St. Paul's* Reasoning had upon a debauch'd and guilty Governor; *Felix trembled.*

By what was remark'd before, we find that the Apostle level'd his Discourse particularly at *Felix*; and from a Survey of his Crimes, he might take an Estimate of his Punishment, and give him a friendly Admonition of that approaching Tribunal, where he must render an Account for all his Transgressions.

Now what more proper Method could there be thought of to deal with this stately Offender, than to draw out a Catalogue of his Offences, and describe the direful Effects which must inevitably attend

Sermon tend them? This was to place his Enemy in *Battle-Array* before him, and to flash the Terrors of Hell and Damnation in his Countenance. This was to awaken his Consideration by an ugly Prospect of himself, and to represent Eternity, *as moving forward to meet him, and gaping on every Side to swallow him up.*

Where is the hardy Sinner, but must with *Felix* quake and tremble, when he sees the Books of Fate opened, and hears the Records of his whole Life proclaimed before *Men and Angels*; when he beholds his crucified Saviour upon the Throne with the bright Retinue of *Che- rubin and Seraphin*, and all the Inhabitants of the Earth expecting their Sentence from his impartial Lips?

There is nothing in *Judgment* but what is frightful and amazing, and the very Description of the Process is apt to shock Nature, and confound the Malefactor. The *Darkning* of the *Sun* is a fatal Prognostic, and the *Turning* of the *Moon* into Blood must be a Terror to Spectators. The Descent of the *Arch-Angel* is solemn and majestic, and the erecting of a Throne in the Air, stately and miraculous. The Shouts in the Element proclaim the Entrance of the Judge, and the *Trump of God* sounds Astonishment into the Ears and Hearts of the startling Dead.

O! Where

O! Where is the *Scorner*, that can *Sermon*
laugh at this tremendous *Appearance*, or *V.*
the *Fool that makes a Mock at Sin?* ~~~~~

Where, Where is the Mirth of the In-
fidel and Atheist, when he feels the
World crackling about his Ears, and the
Elements melting away with fervent Heat?
When he beholds the Removal of
Mountains, and the rending of *Rocks*;
the *tossing of the Earth* from her Centre,
and the *drying up the Ocean with*
Flames?

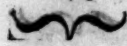
Methinks, I am plac'd already in the
midst of Ruins, and have nothing but
Desolation and Vengeance before mine
Eyes. Methinks, the Battle is already
begun, and Dust and Smoke darken the
Skies. *Fearfulness and Trembling come up-*
on me, and an horrible Dread overwhelmeth
me. I can't so much as bear the Re-
presentation of this Prospect even in
Idea, nor make any Stand against the
yelling of *Furies*, and the weeping and
gnashing of the damn'd. *My Countenance,* Dan. v. 6.
like Belshazzar's, is changed at the Hand-
writing on the Wall, and my Thoughts
trouble me; so that the Joints of my Loins
are loos'd, and my Knees smite one against
another. My Spirits flag, and my Heart
fainteth, and Reason is always whisper-
ing in my Ear, *Seeing all these Things shall* 2 Pet. iii.
be dissolved, what Manner of Persons ought 11, 12.
we to be in all holy Conversation and Godli-
ness, looking for, and hasting unto the com-
ing of the Day of God?

H

Lord,

Sermon

V.



Lord, Grant that the Sense of our Guilt may make us duly apprehensive of the Terrors of Judgment; that Faith and Repentance may pacify the divine Vengeance, and the Merits of our Saviour plead effectually for our Pardon at the last Tribunal. *Amen. Amen.*

Now to God the Father, &c.

SERMON

SERMON VI.

ACTS xxiv. 25.

And as he reasoned of Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy Way for this Time; when I have a convenient Season, I will call for thee.

LET any one suppose himself in a Court of Judicature, where a profligate and tyrannical Person is Judge, and the great and innocent St. Paul is brought as a Prisoner to the Bar, and I cannot but think, that his Eyes must be fix'd upon so pompous an Appearance, and his Expectations rais'd to hear the Issue of the Trial.

I thought it, therefore, necessary to sift as narrowly as I could, into the Circumstances of this Transaction; and I hop'd to engage your Attention by proposing these *Eight* Things to your Consideration:

Sermon
VI.

H 2

FIRST,



The Terrors of Guilt,

FIRST, The argumentative and rational Way, in which St. Paul thought fit to convey his present Discourse ; *He reasoned.*

SECONDLY, The *three* Topics, upon which his Arguments or Reasonings proceeded ; viz. *Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come,*

THIRDLY, The Reasons why St. Paul might at this Time, and before these Persons, so particularly insist upon the fore-mentioned Subjects.

FOURTHLY, The Fitness of such a Discourse before this Audience.

FIFTHLY, The Effects it had upon a debauch'd *Felix.*

SIXTHLY, The Practices of wicked Men, in *trembling* like *Felix*, upon the hearing of their Sins, although they do not sincerely repent of them.

SEVENTHLY, The Uneasiness of guilty Persons when they are tax'd for their Sins, and what Methods they use to evade Reproofs : And this is intimated to us in these Words, *Go thy Way for this Time.*

EIGHTHLY,

The Terrors of Guilt.

101

EIGHTHLY, The Tricks and Artifices of Men in deferring a necessary Duty, under a Pretence of a fitter Opportunity to do it in; *When I have a convenient Season, I will call for thee.*

Sermon
VI.

What relates to the *Preaching* of St. Paul, and the *Trembling* of Felix has been already dispatch'd under the *five* first Heads of this Division of our Text: The *three* remaining are so many practical Remarks upon the Conduct of a guilty and shuffling Sinner, which I thought convenient to reserve for a separate Discourse; that I might leave the Argument with its due Weight upon your Affections, and make the Transacti-
on between the Apostle and the Governor, as useful and instructive as I could, to every Auditor.

SIXTHLY, Then, I observe, That wicked Men, like *Felix*, may *tremble* upon the hearing of their Sins, altho' they don't sincerely repent of them.

If the Discourse be nervous, and the Representation lively; if the Pronunciation be pathetical, and the Gestures serious; it is almost impossible but that the Passions should be mov'd by Truth, and some Impressions left upon a relenting Mind. For Virtue has this Advantage, That she is agreeable to the right Reason and Interest of Mankind, and so charming and attractive in her own
H 3 Nature;

Sermon VI. Nature, that if she does but shew her Face, she puts Vice to the Blush, and commands the Love and Veneration of generous Persons.

But, forasmuch, still as God has laid no Restraint upon free Agents, but left the Soul to struggle with Truth by her natural Faculties, we see that Error too frequently prevails, and Vice triumphs over Virtue. Conviction may in Time be stifled, and the slight Impressions of Duty obliterated. What though our Thoughts *accuse*, or *excuse* us for an Action? What though the Voice of natural Conscience may be loud and clamorous, and the Remorse, quick and pungent? Yet the Sound will easily evaporate, and be lost in Air, and the Bitterness of the Anguish be soon over pass'd. When Sin makes, (if I may so speak) its personal Appearance, and presents it

1 Sam xvii.
16.

felt, like the *Champion of the Philistines*, every Morning and Evening, in *Defiance of the living God*, Nature is apt to start and recoil at the ghastly Sight, and to vent some tragical Exclamations against the ill-favour'd Monster; but the Surprise wears off in Time, and the Object, by frequent Contemplation, becomes familiar.

Notwithstanding, therefore, our Apprehensions of Danger, and some slow Advances towards a Recovery; if we have no better Symptoms, we may still continue under the Tyranny of our Disease, and in a State of Damnation. For what are the first Draughts to the finishing

ing of a Building? What are a few religious Starts and Surprizes, to the Sedateness and compos'd Resolution of a Christian? O Ephraim, *what shall I do unto thee?* O Judah, *what shall I do unto thee?* For your Goodness is as a Morning Cloud, and as the early Dew, it goeth away. The Blossoms are promising, but the Fruit never comes to Maturity: The friendly Drops may water the Earth, and the tender Plant shoot forth its Head, but the Moisture is soon dried up, and the Verdure of the Flower can't bear the Scorching Heat of the Sun.

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Hof. v. 4

I believe, that the most wicked and profligate Persons living are not altogether free from the dreadful Apprehensions of God's Wrath and Vengeance, and are sometimes confounded and amaz'd at the hideous Appearance of their Sins; but no Man can suppose, that this Amazement and Confusion should be of any Efficacy to Salvation, unless it be seconded and further'd by a succeeding Practice of Virtue and Religion. Repentance is a Thing of the highest Concern and Importance, and of too hard and difficult a Nature to be perform'd by any sudden Fits and Girds. It is not a few religious Pangs and Throes, that are sufficient for the *New Birth*: It is not the shedding of a Tear, the Demureness of the Eye, the disfiguring of the Countenance, or the trembling Disorder of the Body, that will present us holy and innocent before God. *Felix* might tremble, and be no

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more a Convert, than *Judas*, a true Christian, when he hang'd himself for his Villainy.

Tears are not always the Fore-runners of Grace and Repentance; neither do the Eyes and Heart sympathize in all their Actions. *The Fruits* must be unto *Holiness*, and the Conversion total and lasting, or else the Penitent is in Danger of a Relapse, and may be baulk'd in his Expectation of eternal Life.

SEVENTHLY, I am to point out the Uneasiness of guilty Persons, when they are charged with their Sins, and what Methods they use to evade Reproofs; and this is intimated to us in these Words, *Go thy Way for this Time.*

Although an honest and plain Admonition is deservedly reckon'd amongst the Offices of Christianity, yet it is the most troublesome and ungrateful Task that can be impos'd upon any Body. For the Generality of Mankind have such an Opinion of their own Actions, and such a Fondness for themselves, that they rarely acknowledge an Error in their Understandings, and can't bear the ripping up of the Miscarriages of their Lives.

What Usage did *Elijah*, and *Micaiah*, and all the *Prophets* of the *Jewish* Nation meet with, for their free Messages to the *Kings of Judah and Israel*? And how were the *Baptist*, our *Saviour*, and all the *Apostles* treated for reprimanding the Vices of the Times, and exposing the Enormities

Enormities of their own Countrymen. To tell a Man *the Truth*, is to commence his *Enemy*, and to correct him for his Faults, (tho' *in the Spirit of Meekness*,) is to assault his Reputation, and to stab him to the very Soul. Vice, when it has once enter'd, is for keeping Possession, and will not endure to be dislodged by an Arraignment. If it cannot silence its Accusers by Dint of Impudence, it will fly to Artifice to evade an Argument, and by a civil Dismission get Rid of that Person who disturbs the Ease, and raises Commotions in the Breast of the Guilty.

I believe that we have most of us our Favourite and beloved Sins, which are too intimate and dear to us to be glanc'd at, or reprov'd. We may, perhaps be tickled and ravished with fine Discourses against Vice in general, and run prodigious Lengths in our Encomiums of the Preacher; but when once the Application comes home to ourselves, and affects the tender Part of our own Consciences, we are nettled and stung with the Affront, and our Hearts stand out in Contempt and Defiance of Reformation. Then 'tis that the very Sight of a faithful Monitor is distasteful to us, and we cannot bear the Frequency and Importunity of his Addresses.

Go thy Way for this Time: Your Doctrine is unseasonable, and your Presence offensive. I cannot suffer my Ears to be always stuffed with religious Cant, nor be a tame Auditor of dull Rules, and
musty

Sermon musty Morality: To be *Priest-ridden* is my Averſion, and a perpetual Pupillage is inconſiſtent with the Freedom of my Nature, and the Maturity of my Age. —

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Go thy Way for this Time. Vice is willing to maintain her Ground a little longer, and to have ſome Reſpite, before ſhe capitulates: Her preſent Habitation ſeems lovely and commodious, and the Heart of a Sinner cannot be ſurrender'd, but upon maturer Thoughts, and by more freſh and repeated Attacks from Virtue. — But,

EIGHTHLY, The fatal Cauſe of all this Shuffle and Eviſion, is the Preſence of a fitter Opportunity for the Performance of our Duty; *when I have a convenient Season I will call for thee*: As much as to ſay, “A more proper Time
“ will preſent itſelf, when I will be ſure
“ to admit thy Perſon to a longer Audience, and to give thy Arguments
“ their due Conſideration. At preſent
“ Company intrudes upon me, and Matters of State engage my Thought; but
“ public Buſineſs will ſoon have an End,
“ and calmer Hours muſt neceſſarily enſue; and then Religion ſhall be the
“ Subject of our Converſation, and the
“ new Doctrine of Chriſtianity fully canvass'd, and impartially weigh'd.

From hence we may gather, That however diſcreet Men may be in their ſecular Affairs, and fearful that they ſhould be ſtreightned for Want of Time, they

they think it no Imprudence to postpone their most weighty Concerns, and are scandalously remiss and dilatory in their Transactions for Eternity. The present Season is for the Enjoyment of Sin, and the Refuse of our Time may be sufficient for Mortification and Repentance. Religion is cry'd out upon as too starch'd an Exercise for the Gaiety of Youth, and too trifling and slender a Matter for our manly Years. Politics and Business are the fittest Employments, whilst we have Health of Body, and Vigour of Mind; but Seriousness is proper for old Age, and Devotion should be adjourn'd to a sick Bed.

These Sentiments, I am very well persuaded, are at the Bottom of most Mens Hearts; and tho' their Lips do not proclaim their Impiety, their Practice is a sufficient Indication of their Principles.

I hope, therefore, that I may be easily pardon'd, if, from this Dismission of St. Paul by Felix, I shall more particularly address my self to you against the current and prevailing Custom of neglecting our Duty in our Health, and deferring our Repentance till the Time of our Death.

First, I would have all careless and wicked Persons consider, That Delays in Religion are attended with a great Degree of Presumption.

Secondly, That they daily add to the Weight of Sin.

Thirdly,



Thirdly, That they must involve us in greater Difficulties for the future.

Fourthly, That they stave off Repentance to the most unfit and dangerous Season of performing it.

First, I would have all careless and wicked Persons consider, That Delays in Religion are attended with a great Degree of Presumption.

As it is God that worketh in us both
 Phil. ii. 13. *to will and to do of his good Pleasure*; so we must conclude that the Liberty of a *spiritual Man* is very precarious, and the Performance of our Duty impossible, without the Prevention and Assistance of divine Grace. The Bent of Nature is visibly on the Side of Vice; the animal Part has the Ascendant of the Rational; and the Law in the Members is too hard for the Law in the Mind.

Now in this State of Decay and Corruption, it is the Interest and Duty of every Candidate for Salvation, to encourage all the inward Motions and Suggestions of the Spirit, and close with all the outward Terms and Proposals of Happiness. Whoever flights the Means and Opportunities of Improvement, or defers the Performance of his Duty when it is in his Power, throws himself out of the Protection of Providence, and depends upon such future Aids and Assistances as may never be offer'd him.

Gen. vi. 3. *My Spirit (says God) shall not always strive with Man: My Grace is free, and my*

my Favours at my own Disposal: And Sermon
who then art thou, O vain Creature, that VI.

presumest upon thy own Sufficiency, and darest to dictate and prescribe to thy Maker? God governs the World in Righteousness, and communicates his Favours with Wisdom; and whoever doth not embrace the Times and Seasons of doing his Duty, as they are graciously presented to him, but is dilatory and remiss upon a Pretence of greater Leisure and Convenience, seems to tie down Omnipotence to his own Humour, and to make himself a Judge where he ought only to be a Petitioner. What! Have we any Demands upon our Sovereign? *Can a Man be profitable to God? Is it any Pleasure to the Almighty that we are righteous? Or is it Gain to him, that we make our Ways perfect?* Why must divine Grace wait upon our Nod, and infinite Goodness force us to be happy, when we have taken so many Opportunities, and us'd so much Pains to make our selves miserable?

Secondly, I would, in the next Place, caution you against Delays in Religion, because they increase our Guilt.

Sin is like a Gangrene, always spreading and eating. Time doth but heighten the Malignity of the Disease, and Forbearance renders it the more incureable. The Debt must be cancell'd, or the Interest will be always growing, and the Borrower render'd beggarly and insolvent.

Whoever

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Rom. xiii.
11, 12, 13.

Whoever thinks by Delays, to put his spiritual Affairs in a better Posture, and to act with more mature Judgment and Consideration for the future, seems grossly ignorant of the Vigilance, the Craft, and Activity of Satan, and his Emissaries. Alas! As long as we *linger*, as long as Sin and Guilt remain upon the Conscience, the Enemy is actually plundering our Territories, seducing the Inhabitants into fresh Mutinies, and garrisoning the Soul against the Returns and Attacks of Virtue. O! Then *quit your selves like Men*, and act with Spirit and Resolution. *Awake out of Sleep*, and extricate your Souls from Slavery. *Cast off the Works of Darknefs, and put on the Armour of Light: Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not Provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof.*

Thirdly, I would beg you farther to consider, That delaying of your Duty must involve you in greater Difficulties for the future. Whilst we trifle and dumber in Matters of Consequence, and are regardless of the Overtures and Invitations to Salvation, we fright God's Spirit from us, and stifle all his friendly Motions and Suggestions. Continuance in Sin banishes Shame, and hardens Conscience. Laziness enervates the Soul, and perverts the right Use of the Faculties. Habits render us insensible, and Custom changes the very Nature of Virtue and Vice.

Thus

Thus our Case becomes deplorable, Sermon
our Disease inveterate, and our Recovery VI.
next Door to impossible. *For can the*
Ethiopian change his Skin, or the Leopard
his Spots? Then may ye also do good, that
are accustomed to do Evil.

The only Twig, Men have to catch
at, and the last Refuge to which they
can resort, is the Hopes of calmer and
sedate Thoughts in the Time of Sick-
ness, and at the Hour of Departure.

That I may, therefore, beat off the
Sinner from this Hold, I shall

First, Shew the Unfitness of our last
Minutes for the Exercise of Repen-
tance.

Secondly, Endeavour to convince you of
the great Danger, that such a Re-
pentance will not be acceptable to
God.

First, I observe the Unfitness of our
last Minutes for the Exercise of Repen-
tance.

Is that a proper Time to begin to live,
when Death is staring us in the Face, and
the Soul is setting out for Eternity? Is
that a proper Season for the Recollection
of our past Actions, when we have hard-
ly any Knowledge of our present Ones?
Is that a fit Time for Composure and
Calmness, when we toss and roar for the
Disquietude of our Souls, and there is no
Soundness in our Flesh, nor Rest in our Bones
by Reason of our Pain?

The

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The Prospect in these Cases is so dismal, and the Work so difficult; the Time of acting so short, and the Returns of Misery so frequent and numerous, that a Man throws by the Thoughts of his Duty, and dies either *presumptuously*, or *despairing*: For he will either look only on the delightful Scenes of approaching Felicity, and entertain himself with the Mercies of God, and the Merits of his Saviour; and by this Means lull his Soul into a foolish Security, and *speak Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace*; or else he will not be able to sustain the violent Shocks of Conscience, and bear up against the upbraiding Testimonies of a bad Life: And then all Things will be dark and gloomy about him, and when he sees *Hell and Destruction naked before him*, and feels himself sinking into the Regions of Darkness, he must quit the Stage with Reluctance, and resign up his Breath with Raving and Distraction.

Secondly and lastly, There is a great Danger, that a Death-Bed Repentance will not be acceptable to God.

He that is only religious just upon his Departure, seems to act by Necessity and Compulsion; and does not seek to God out of a voluntary Principle of Obedience, but from the Dictates of a dastardly and slavish Fear. He embraces Virtue, because he has no Relish for Vice, and forsakes his Sin, because a diseas'd Body is not fit for the Enjoyment of it any longer.

And

And now what is there, that is really Sermon VI.
 praise-worthy and honourable in these
 Proceedings? What Congruity in these
 involuntary Actions to recommend a Man
 to a Reward? He that leaves his Sins by
 Constraint and Necessity can no more
 presume upon the Mercy or Favour of
 God, than a Rebel can expect a Pardon
 from his Prince, for laying down his
 Arms when he can hold them up no
 longer.

We must certainly think God a very
 tame and easy Being, if some grave Sen-
 tences upon the *Bed of Languishing*, and
 a Shriek or two in our last Agonies, are
 a sufficient Preparation for Heaven.

Upon this Principle, the *Epicure* had
 nothing to do, *but to eat and to drink, for*
to Morrow he must die. The *Sensualist*
 might make Provision as fast as he could
 for the *Flesh*, to fulfil the Lusts thereof: And
 the young Man might rejoice in the Day of
 his Youth, and walk in the Ways of his
 Heart, and in the Sight of his Eyes: For
 the Days of Darkness are not worth his
 Remembrance, and a future Judgment may
 be imaginary and precarious.

But this is a very fatal and pernicious
 Mistake: For God insists upon the Trial
 of our Virtues, and the repeated Exer-
 cise of the several Parts of Religion.
 He requires our early and vigorous Years
 for his Service; the Bloom of our Youth,
 and the First-Fruits of our Health, before Eccles. xii.
 the evil Days come, and the Years draw
 nigh, when we shall have no Pleasure or Sa-
 tisfaction

Sermon tisfaction in Living. He will not be put
 VI. off with *Felix's Excuse*, nor admit of
 Prorogations and Adjournments upon the
 uncertain Prospect of later Performances.
 Our Conversion must be speedy and last-
 ing; the Sincerity of Repentance must
 be notified by Reformation and Amend-
 mentment; and a *Death unto Sin* follow'd
 by a *Life unto Righteousness*. When this
 is done, our spiritual Affairs are in a pro-
 mising Posture, and Death it self can no
 Ways surprize or affrighten us. Our In-
 terest is secur'd, and our Pardon seal'd:
 Quietness and Assurance shall refresh our
 expiring Spirits, and *Fulness of Joy*, and
Rivers of Pleasures attend our Dissolu-
 tion. *Amen.*

Fast

*Faith triumphant over the Glories
of this World.*

IN TWO

SERMONS

Preached at the
Cathedral in WELLS.

HEBR. xi. 24, 25, 26.

*By Faith Moses, when he came to Years,
refused to be called the Son of Pha-
roah's Daughter ;*

*Choosing rather to suffer Affliction with
the People of God, than to enjoy the
Pleasures of Sin for a Season ;*

*Esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater
Riches than the Treasures of Egypt :
For he had Respect unto the Recom-
pence of Reward.*

THE main Design of the Apostle
in this Chapter is to explain the
Nature, and set forth the Pow-
er and Efficacy of Faith. The Nature of
Faith is defin'd in the first Verse to be,
The Substance of Things hoped for, and the
Evidence

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Sermon VII. *Evidence of Things not seen.* The Power and Efficacy of Faith is represented to us by a long Enumeration of several eminent and illustrious Persons, who, by their Trust and Affiance in God, perform'd the most signal Services for their Church and Country, and have been the Light and Glory of the World, from the first Creation of Mankind to the Time of the Gospel Oeconomy.

The Person who is extoll'd in the Text, is *Moses*, a Name very famous amongst the *Jewish* Nation, as well upon the Account of the great Favours which he receiv'd from God, as those many noble Exploits which he did for his own Country-men.

By Faith Moses, when he came to Years, refused, &c.

From these Words, I design to do four Things;

FIRST, To speak something briefly of *Faith* in general, upon which such a mighty Stress is laid in the Text, and such a high Character is given throughout this whole Chapter.

SECONDLY, To set forth the Greatness of *Moses's Faith*, in those several Instances which are specify'd in the Text.

THIRDLY, To produce the Motive and Inducements which rais'd this Man's Faith to such an high Pitch.

FOURTH-

FOURTHLY, To shew how the several Instances of *Moses's Faith* may be serviceable towards the Regulation and Government of our Lives.

FIRST, I am to speak something briefly of *Faith* in general, upon which such a mighty Stress is laid in the Text, and such an high Character is given throughout this whole Chapter: Not that I design to give you a dry Collection of the different Acceptations of the Word, or to take off the Edge of your Attention by a Number of pedantic Quotations from *Holy Writ*; but only to remark so much to you from the Context as may shew you the Force of the Apostle's Argument, and be a necessary Foundation to build our ensuing Discourses upon.

Now that I may, in as short a Compass as possible, deliver my Sentiments upon this Subject, I must beg Leave to repeat what I quoted to you before from the first Verse of this Chapter, *Faith is the Substance of Things hoped for*; where the Greek Word *ὑπόστασις*, which our Interpreters have translated *Substance*, is thought by Commentators to admit of another Signification, and to be more properly render'd by *Dependence*, *Confidence*, or *Expectation*; so that the Meaning of this Definition of the Apostle, (*ἡ πίστις ἐντιλογούμενη ὑπόστασις*, *Faith is the Substance of Things hoped for*) is no more than that *Faith* is a confident Dependence upon

Vid. Harp.
in Loc.

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on the Veracity of God for the Performance of his Promises, and a real Persuasion of the Truth of those Things whereof we have no ocular or sensible Demonstration.

Upon this Footing a good Part of the Apostle's arguing in the foregoing, as well as in the present Chapter, does manifestly proceed, and upon these Assurances the Courage of the primitive Christians was supported and buoy'd up under all the dreadful Storms of Persecution which fell upon the Church. *Cast not away, (says he) your Confidence, which hath great Recompence of Reward: But hold fast the Profession of your Faith without wavering, (for he is faithful that promised.) For ye have need of Patience; that after ye have done the Will of God, ye might receive the Promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.*

These Exhortations to Constancy and Perseverance are farther enforc'd by the Examples of *Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham*, and others, who depending upon the Veracity of God, and the Immutability of his Promises, despis'd Dangers, and conquer'd Temptations; relinquish'd their present Enjoyments, and rely'd upon distant Reversions.

How highly *Moses* distinguish'd himself in these and other Respects, and how well he deserv'd those lofty Encomiums which are recorded of him in the Text, will be best discover'd by entring

SECOND

over the Glories of this World.

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SECONDLY, Upon the Particulars of his Faith :

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And here four Things are remarkable,

First, The Time of the Declaration of this Faith ; it was made when he came to Years.

Secondly, The Privileges which he debarr'd himself from by that Declaration, viz. the Honour of being called the Son of Pharoah's Daughter.

Thirdly, The Troubles and Calamities which he involv'd himself in upon that Account, viz. The suffering Affliction with the People of God.

Fourthly, The Preference he gave these Sufferings to the sinful Pleasures and Preferments of a Court: He esteem'd the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt.

First, The first Thing remarkable in Moses's Faith, was the Time of its Declaration ; it was made when he came to Years, (μῆρας γενόμενος,) when he was grown big ; an Expression which denotes the Maturity of his Age, as well as the Fulness of his Stature, and which is borrow'd from the Septuagint-Version of the 11th Verse of the 2d Chapter of Exodus : When Moses was grown, (μῆρας γενόμενος Μωϋσῆς,) he went out unto his Brethren, and looked on their Burthens. This Time of his Growth is fixed by St. Stephen to forty Years com-

Sermon pleat ; for when he was full forty Years

VII. old, (says he,) it came into his Heart to vi-
 sit his Brethren, the Children of Israel. The

Acts vii.

23.

v. 22.

The Reason why I insist so particularly upon this Circumstance of Time, and endeavour to be so exact in the Calculation of his Age, is to give you a fuller View of the Greatness of his *Faith* : For *Moses* being now arrived to an Age wherein the Judgment is supposed to be settled, and being prejudiced by his Education against his *Kindred* and Countrymen, it is surprising how he should, by the Assistance of *Faith*, break through all Opposition on a sudden, and turn Advocate for his Brethren, at a Time when they could least expect such a generous Interposel. This eminent Man had spent his youthful Days in the search of Learning, and the Arts of Government ; and being transmitted to us by the *Holy Ghost*, for a Person vers'd in *all the Wisdom of the Egyptians*, and *mighty in Words and in Deeds* ; the least that we can gather from hence is, that he was endow'd with extraordinary *natural*, as well as *acquired* Abilities, and was remarkable for the Depth of his Understanding, in fathoming of *Truth*, as well as the Dexterity of his Management in relation to *Civil Affairs*. But *here* the Difficulty still grows upon us ; *here* the Surprise thickens upon our Hands ; how a Person taken away from his Parents in his Infancy, and bred up in Ignorance of his *Kindred*, and in Opposition to the *Laws and Customs* of his native Country ; a Per-
 son

son adopted into the Royal Family, and declared *Heir Apparent* to one of the most flourishing Kingdoms in the World; a Person, whose Studies had been bent to profane Learning, and whose Mind had been taught to despise the present Slavery of the *Hebrews*: How, (I say) a Person under these Disadvantages and Præ-possessions, should so easily shake off all Encumbrances, and after the Experience of *forty Years*, (a Time which generally fixes the Judgment, and makes Men fond and tenacious of the Principles they have imbibed, and pettish and morose under any Contradiction and Restraint :) This, this is what must call forth the Attention, and raise the Admiration of any sober Audience. I don't propose the Case (my Brethren !) with these surprizing Circumstances to weaken the Authority of the Fact, or invalidate the Relations of Holy Scripture, but purely to raise the noblest Ideas I can in your Minds, of the Candor, Dis-interestness, and Ingenuity of that Person, upon whom the divine Grace had such a sudden and powerful Influence. For *Moses being taken up by Pharaoh's Daughter, and nourished for her own Son*, it is to be supposed he was to be bred according to the Direction of that Princess, and educated in the effeminate Mode of the *Eastern Countries*; and, by Consequence, was exposed to a soft and luxurious Method of Life, and tempted by all the Pleasures of a wanton and airy Court: But his *Faith* was too hard for Tempta-

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Acts vii. 21.

Sermon VII. Temptations; his Reason was a Curb upon his Passions, and his Meekness the Security of his Youth. — And from hence we may learn to improve those good Dispositions which are implanted in our Natures, and to offer no Restraint or Violence to the secret Whispers and Workings of the Spirit. From hence we may learn not to be ty'd down to the Prejudices of a contrary Education, or born away by the Current of secular Interest; not to be lifted up with an Air of Vanity and Ambition, or gull'd along by the Fondness of Self-Love: But to use our Reason, and to act like Men; to offer ourselves readily to Conviction, and steer our Courses by the Motives of Credibility; *for God is faithful who hath promised us*, and his Goodness will move, his Power enable, and his Veracity engage him to a punctual Performance of all his Promises. Tho' some Difficulties may seem to obstruct our Passage, and our own Slothfulness may represent a *Lion in the Way*; yet Providence will, in due Time, remove all Impediments, and convey us triumphantly to our Journey's End.

Secondly, I am to consider the Privileges which *Moses* debarr'd himself from, by this Declaration of his *Faith*, viz. the Honour of being called the *Son of Pharaoh's Daughter*.

This Princess, according to * *Josephus*,

* *Joseph. Antiq. Jud. Lib. 11. Pag. 77. Edit. Hudf.*

had actually adopted *Moses* for her Son, Sermon
 and (the Royal Line being like to be ex- VII.
 tinct for want of *Issue Male*) he was the
 next Heir, by Right of Succession, to the
 Throne. By Virtue of this Relation, he
 had the best Education which the most
 learned Nation in the World could af-
 ford, and was frequently brought to Court
 upon the Account of his Parts and Beau-
 ty. At one Time in particular, during
 his Childhood, he was presented by the
 Princess *Thermuthis*, to her Royal Father,
 who embrac'd him in his Arms, and put
 the Crown upon his Head; but the Child
 pull'd it off with some sort of Indigna-
 tion, and, throwing it upon the Ground,
 trampled it under his Feet. This Acti-
 on was resented by the Courtiers, and in-
 terpreted by the wise Men, *Ὅτιων δὲ τῇ βα-*
σιλείᾳ φέρεται, to portend some fatal Omen
 to the Nation, and the King hotly peti-
 tion'd to sacrifice *Moses* for the Security of
 his own Person, and the Prevention of his
 Country's Ruin.

The *Historian* proceeds to shew at large
 how providentially *Moses* was preserv'd
 from this imminent Danger, and the Scrip-
 tures confirm the Truth of the Predicti-
 on by relating the *Overtbrow of Pharoah*
and his Host in the Red Sea.

But let the Event of this Prophecy be
 what it will, in Relation to the King of
Egypt; we may plainly see, that some
 Circumstances of the Story so well
 agree with the Relation in the Text,
 as evidently to presage that gene-
 rous

Sermon rous Contempt which *Moses* should entertain of the Grandeur and Honours of the Egyptian Court, and his pious Refusal of all those Advantages of Sovereignty which were entailed upon him by Adoption.

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This Instance of Meekness and Debasement is the more remarkable, because it is so disagreeable to the Inclinations, and contrary to the Practices of the Generality of Mankind: For Ambition is a Passion so prevalent in human Nature, that we have need of the Assistance of all Christian Virtues and Graces to fence against it, and we very rarely find a Person of so humble and mortify'd a Temper, as to despise its Flatteries, and reject its Proposals. *Trahimur omnes studio laudis, & optimus quisque maxime gloria ducitur.* Tho' some trifling Excuses may be invented, some formal Compliments squeez'd out to notify the Inabilities of a Person promoted to Honour; yet an inward Satisfaction still glows in his Breast, and an outward Joy sparkles in his Countenance.

Cicero.

Now if it stands thus upon the Obtainment of every petty Preferment, of every ordinary Promotion upon Earth; what shall we say, when Crowns and Scepters are the Bait of our Ambition, and the Kingdoms of this World, and the Glories thereof are propos'd to our Acceptance? Who in this Case would argue and demur? Who, but *Moses*, would disclaim the Honour of the Royal Blood, and disown his Relation to a King's Daughter?

It

It is usual for the rising Men of this World to deny the Poverty of their Parentage, and to cover the Meanness of their Original; and tho' their Descent should happen to be too well known, and their Pedigree run up to an inglorious Head, they still insist upon the Antiquity of their Blood, and impute the Disgrace of their Ancestors to some unavoidable Misfortune. The Usurpers of old were unwilling to be thought Robbers, and every *Pagan* Hero would pass for the Son of a God. The *Roman Emperors* were fond of an *ἀποθεώσις*, and from Flattery on Earth aspired to Adoration in Heaven. *Alexander the Great*, being flush'd with Conquest, deny'd his Relation to his Father *Philip*, and proclaim'd his Mother a Strumpet to prove himself the Son of *Jupiter Hammon* *.

In succeeding Ages we find the same Perjury and Ambition upon the least Prospect of Honour and Advancement. For how aspiring are the Generality of Mankind after Empire, and what hazardous Methods do they engage in, to raise themselves above their Competitors? *The Kings and Rulers* of this World forfeit their Words, and break their Treaties; exhaust their Treasure, and sacrifice their Subjects Lives, upon every trifling Af-

* Quod olim pravâ mente conceperat, tunc esse maturum, quoniam modo cœlestes honores usurparet, cepit cogitare. Jovis filium non dici tantum se, sed etiam credi volebat, tanquam perinde animis imperare posset, ac linguis. Quint. Curt. Lib. 8. Cap. 5. p. 296. Edit. Freinsh.

Sermon front, or pretended Invasion of their Dominions. *One Man* betrays his Friend,

VII. *Another* forsakes his Religion for a Crown. A *Third* disputes a suspected Title with Sword in Hand, and a *Fourth* imbrues his Arms in the Blood of his Parents. The young expecting Heir enquires with Impatience into the Years of the present Possessor, and a discarded Favourite and an enraged Ministry, are always impatient for a new Monarch. Insufficiency and Male-Administration are sounded into the Ears of the discontented Rabble; arbitrary Proceedings and Invasion of Property are never-failing Pretences to declare a *Vacancy of the Throne*.

But *Moses* was of a quite different Opinion, and instead of making any unjust and untimely Approaches towards Greatness, he own'd his Birth to the Prejudice of his Interest, and voluntarily refus'd the Honour of a Crown, to which he had a fair and legal Title. The same Contempt of earthly Grandeur, and generous Refusal of Government follow'd this meek and humble Man thro' the whole Course of his Life. For notwithstanding that ungrateful Reflection of one of his Country-men, *Who made thee a Prince and a Judge over us?* (as if he usurped a Province, and exercis'd an Authority which he was no Ways commissioned to;) Yet we find that when God in his Anger would have destroy'd the whole Jewish Nation, and blotted out their Name from under Heaven, and made of him a Nation mightier

Ex. ii. 14.

Deut. ix. 14.

mightier and greater than they; he re- Sermoh
jected the Proposal with the profoundest VII.
Modesty, and prefer'd the re-instating of
his Brethren in the Almighty's Favour,
to the Advancement of himself, and the
ennobling of his Family.

These two Passages in *Moses's Life* are
such eminent Instances of Humility and
Self-denial as we can find no where pa-
rallel'd in History, unless in that surpris-
ing Example of the Lord of Life and
Glory, who, when the People assembled
to take him by Force and make him a King, Joh. vi. 15.
withdrew himself from the Honour, and
refus'd a Crown with greater Courage
than other aspiring Persons fight for One.

Thirdly, Another signal Instance of
Moses's Faith, was his choosing to suffer
Affliction with the People of God.

This Part of Misfortune is what he
might have easily been freed from, if he
would but have used that Care and Cir-
cumspection, which not only the Politic
and designing, but the cautious and pru-
dent Part of the World think themselves at
Liberty to practice. For he was not dri-
ven by Compulsion, or obliged by any
Threatnings, to own his Birth. But the
Dictates of Conscience produc'd the Con-
fession, and the Service of his Country-
men forwarded the Discovery. Εὐχόμενος
ἐνυμνεῖν αὐτῶν, He chose to suffer: What
the Right of Adeption might have freed
him from, his own Choice subjected him
to; what hard Necessity forc'd his Bre-
thren

Sermon thren to endure, a pious Generosity made
 VII. him the voluntary Partaker in.



Hebr. xii.
 11.

We are taught by the *Apostle*, that no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; and human Nature is so far from courting Pain, that it too too frequently declines the Combat, when God and Religion call it to *Sufferings*: Riches and Honour (we know) are generally look'd upon with a greedy Eye; and the middle State, by the Supports of Religion and the Art of Contentment, is rendered tolerable: But Poverty and Disgrace are the Plagues of this transitory Life; Pain and Misery are the Objects of our Aversion. Nature loves her Ease, and every Being studies its own Preservation. Reason disposes the Sons of Men to Rest and Quietness, and Prudence endeavours to guard them from those Disasters which could ruffle and discompose their Serenity. What generous Motives then must engage *Moses* to surmount and transcend Nature, and even conquer the prevailing Desires and Inclinations of Humanity! What Principles were those that despis'd Plenty and courted Afflictions, and by a strong and lively Dependence on Almighty Providence chose voluntarily to suffer with the Faithful in their most disconsolate Circumstances!

We oftentimes magnify the Courage and Piety of those compassionate Heroes, who espouse the Quarrels of an enslaved People, and free the neighbouring Nations from arbitrary Power and Oppression:

pression: But, tho' Religion be the Pre-
tence, and Property the Cry, we find
that Ambition is the general Spur and
Incentive to these heroical Enterprizes,
and that the Patrons and Assertors of Li-
berty always aim at the Government of
the People whom they have been so ge-
nerous to redeem.

Sermon
VII.

But the Reverse of all this is very re-
markable in the Example before us. For
Moses embark'd in the Service of his Bre-
thren at the Expence of his personal In-
terest, and solicited and carried on their
Cause by the Forfeiture of his own Cha-
racter. There was nothing presented to
his Eyes, but an enrag'd Prince and a
persecuting Court; nothing sounding in
his Ears, but the Exactions of Officers,
and the Groans of the afflicted. *The* Exo. xiii.
*Egyptians forc'd the Children of Israel to*¹⁴
serve with Rigour, and made their Lives
bitter with hard Bondage, in Mortar, and
in Brick, and in all Manner of Service in
the Field. Whoever pitied their Condi-
tion, incurred the Displeasure of the
Court; whoever censured their *Task-ma-*
sters, disputed the Authority of *Pharoah*;
and whoever abetted their afflicted Cause,
involved himself in the same Afflictions
with the Sufferers.

Now upon such a dismal Prospect, and
under such frightful Circumstances, who
can sufficiently extol the Man, who dar'd
face Adversity, and make even Misery
his Option? The *Stoics* pretended to
root out all Passions from human Nature,

K

and

Sermon and suppos'd their Heroes insensible of
 VII. Pain before they engag'd them in any
 ~~~~~ hazardous Enterprize. But behold a  
 greater Example of Fortitude in a Per-  
 son, who dar'd so far own himself a *Man*  
 as to be liable to Infirmities, and capable  
 of Pain; and yet, for the *Love of his*  
*Brethren*, and the *Honour of his God*, did  
 voluntarily stoop from the Affluence of  
 of a *Court* to the Slavery of a *Captive*,  
 and generously relinquish'd his Princely  
 State and Grandeur to embrace a cruel  
 and ignominious Poverty.

And this brings me to the last Particu-  
 lar, wherein *Moses's Faith*, or Depen-  
 dence upon God, did shew it self, *viz.*

*Fourthly*, In the Preference he gave  
 the Sufferings of the *Hebrews* to the sin-  
 ful Pleasures and Preferments of an *Ægyptian*  
*Court*: He esteem'd the *Reproach of*  
*Christ* greater Riches than the *Treasures of*  
*Ægypt*.

This Passage may perhaps appear a  
 little perplex'd and intricate at the first  
 View, and may be apt to raise the fol-  
 lowing Scruple in the Mind of any Per-  
 son who is but moderately vers'd in the  
 Computation of Time.

“How could *Moses*, who was dead  
 “so many hundred Years before the  
 “Coming of *Christ*, be represented  
 “as living under the evangelical Dispen-  
 “sation, and putting the Infamy of the  
 “*Cross* in Competition with the *Treasures*  
 “of *Ægypt*?

But

But this seeming Mistake in Point of Time will be easily accounted for, and the Apostle's Argument will appear in its full Force, if we consider these three Things.

Sermon VII.

*First*, That *Moses* was a *Prophet* and a *Type* of *Christ*, and being endued with the Gift of Inspiration, had a Foreknowledge of the Gospel-State, and might be privy to some future Occurrences in the Kingdom of the *Messiah*.

*Secondly*, That the Hardships which the *Hebrews* endur'd from the *Aegyptian Task-masters*, did lively represent the Afflictions of the *Church* in its Infancy, and carried a near Resemblance to the State of *Christians* at the Time when this *Epistle* was penn'd.

*Thirdly*, That the Deliverance of the *Israelites* by the Intercession and Mediation of *Moses* was the most proper Emblem of the grand Redemption of Sinners by *Christ Jesus*, and the Victories and Triumphs which he, the *Captain of our Salvation*, obtained over *Sin*, *Satan* and *Death*.

These Things being premised, the Difficulty in the Text will soon be reconciled, by considering, that the Scriptures do, in a typical and prophetical Way, represent Things future as if they were actually present: And by Consequence, there can be no more Reason to accuse the Author of this *Epistle* for a chronological Mistake, because he brought in *Moses* as conversant in the Gospel-Oeco-



Sermon nomy; than there is in joining with the *Jews*  
 VII. to villify our Saviour for a Lyer, because  
 he said, *Your Father Abraham rejoiced to*  
 Joh. viii. 56. *see my Day; and he saw it, and was glad.*

It is farther remarkable, that the Apostle does in this Place, by way of Figure and Allusion, argue from the State of the *Hebrews* under the *Ægyptian* Slavery to the Distresses and Afflictions of the Church at the present Juncture, and introduces *Moses*, the Fore-runner of Christ, preferring a persecuted Religion to the Wealth and Greatness of *Ægypt*, that by the same Motives, he might instigate Believers to renounce all secular Advantages for the Cause of their common despis'd Christianity. In giving this Advice, St. Paul stirs up the Christians to no other Duty than what he himself had put in Practice: *For he counted all Things but Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord: For whom he suffer'd the Loss of all Things, and did count them but Dung that he might win Christ.*

Phil. iii. 8.

Upon the same Prospect it was that *Moses's Faith* was enliven'd, and his Trust and Affiance riveted and cemented in Providence: He survey'd the Blessings which were entailed upon his Ancestors, and relied upon the Promises of an immutable God for the Preservation of his Country-men. The Delights of *Ægypt* came far short of the Pleasures of Religion; the Company of a Court was infinitely inferior to the Conversation of his Maker,

Maker, and all the Treasures of the *East* Sermon  
not comparable to those temporary Af- VII.  
flictions which were preparatory to eter-  
nal Glory.

But the Prosecution of this Argument falling more directly under my next Head of Discourse, which was to produce the Motives and Inducements which rais'd this Man's Faith to such an high Pitch; and I having reserv'd *That*, and the Remainder of the Text, till another Opportunity, shall detain this Audience no longer than whilst I conclude all with the following Collect.

O God, who hast compassed us about with a Cloud of Martyrs, and strengthened and edified thy Church by the Examples of Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles;  
“ \* Grant us so perfectly, and without  
“ all Doubt to believe in thy Son Jesus  
“ Christ, that our Faith in thy Sight  
“ may never be reprov'd; and endue us  
“ with such a Measure of Heavenly  
“ Grace, † that we may so follow the  
“ Blessed Saints in all virtuous and God-  
“ ly Living, that we may come to those  
“ unspeakable Joys which thou hast pre-  
“ pared for them that unfeignedly love  
“ thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
“ Amen.

† Coll. for St. Thomas.

‡ Coll. for All-Saints.

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## SERMON VIII.

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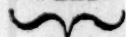
HEBR. xi. 24, 25, 26.

*By Faith Moses, when he was come to Years, refused to be called the Son of Pharoah's Daughter;*

*Choosing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season:*

*Esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt: For he had Respect unto the Recompence of Reward.*

Sermon  
VIII.



v. 33, 34.

**A**MONGST the many Heroes, which are celebrated in this Chapter, for the Victories and Triumphs of their Faith, the Character of Moses is of no inferior Consideration. For tho' others subdued Kingdoms, and wrought Wonders, stopp'd the Mouths of Lions, and quench'd the Violence of Fire; yet Moses, (besides an equal Share even in these miraculous Achievements,) was remarkable for the Victory over himself, and for conquering all those ambitious and



and exorbitant Passions, which are incident to great Men, and essential to high Stations. Upon this Account, his Example may be of greater Service to those of his Posterity, who (being destitute of the Power of working Miracles, and defending themselves by super-natural Assistance) may be yet plac'd in like Circumstances, and expos'd to the same Temptations with himself. I thought therefore that I could not do Justice to this eminent Person, (*who was beloved of God and Men, and sanctified in his Faithfulness and Meekness,*) nor recommend his Example with its due Advantages to the Imitation of this Audience, unless I proceeded after the following Method.

Sermon  
VIII.

Ecclus xlv.  
1, 4.

FIRST, Premising something by way of Introduction concerning *Faith* in general, upon which such a mighty Stress is laid in the Text, and such an high Character is given throughout this whole Chapter.

SECONDLY, Setting forth the Greatness of *Moses's Faith* in the several Particulars which are mention'd in the Text.

THIRDLY, Producing the Motives and Inducements which rais'd this *Man's Faith* to such an high Pitch.

FOURTHLY, Shewing how the several Instances of *Moses's Behaviour*

*Faith triumphant*

our in the Text may be serviceable towards the Regulation and Government of our Lives.

The two first Branches of this Division being already dispatch'd, I shall, without any farther Repetition or Tautology, hasten to the Discussion of the two remaining.

THIRDLY, Then I am to produce the Motives and Inducements which rais'd *Moses's Faith* to such an high Pitch.— And these, as far as they are express'd, or intimated to us by the Apostle, may be reduc'd to the following Heads.

*First*, The short Enjoyment of Sin.

*Secondly*, The cruel and persecuting Temper of the *Ægyptian* Court.

*Thirdly*, The Promise of God to the *Israelites*.

*Fourthly*, The Recompence of Reward.

*First*, The first Motive that rais'd *Moses's Faith* to that high Pitch, which has been describ'd in my fore-going Discourse, was the Consideration of the short Enjoyment of Sin. This the Text is pleas'd to call *πρόσκαιρον ἀπόλαυσιν*, an Enjoyment only for a short and inconsiderable Space of Time in this World, but such as had no manner of Claim to Duration, or Prospect of Futurity. For the Days of a Sinner are uncertain, and his Happiness is precarious; the Hazard he

runs

runs is great, and his future Loss may prove irreparable. Our sinful Pleasures can at best reach no farther than the Continuance of human Life; and *Life* too is oftentimes shortened and cut off by the Effects and Excesses of our Pleasures. The *Adulterer* brings Rottenness into his Bones, and the *Drunkard* Redness into his Eyes; the *Harlot* may be fir'd with every wanton Embrace, and the *Rioter* encounter Death in every Street.

But this is not yet the worst of the Misfortune: For tho' Life is short, and Pleasures may make it shorter, the Sinner has no Security of indenting with Happiness even for this transitory State, or carrying his Enjoyments, in a full and uninterrupted Course, to the Grave.

The *Miser* may bolt his Doors, and lock his Coffers, and survey with the most watchful Eye his beloved Lands and Tenements; yet how can he be certain that Riches shall not steal from their Confinement, and make themselves Wings and fly away; or that Providence shall not thwart his griping Designs, and Thieves and Robbers ravage his Patrimony?

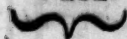
The *Epicure* may have his Bill of Fare for every Season, and ransack all the Elements for the Gratification of his Luxury; but who knows, how his Health may be impaired, his Constitution broken, and his Appetite pall'd by the Repetition of Enjoyment?

The



Sermon

VIII.



The *Courtier* may pride himself in the Favour of his Prince, and an Interest in his Country, and lay mighty Schemes of perpetuating his Name, and establishing his Family; but what little Accidents may throw him from the Top of Grandeur, and strip him of all his Glories in a Moment? Who, in this Case, can be a Stranger to the Fate of *Haman* and *Sejanus*? Who can put from his Thoughts the pompous Cardinal of our own Nation, or the over-grown Favourites of neighbouring States? Who can do otherwise than think of your Traitors and Usurpers, of your *Sylla's* and *Pym's*, who, like *Herod*, were eaten up of Worms, whilst they were Lording it in their Usurpations, and grew offensive to their Friends by their *lowsey Distempers*, before they could finish their Courses, and resign their Breaths.

Great Men are always envied, and *high Stations* are precarious and *slippery*: Fame delights in jilting her Admirers, and Fortune plays her ill-natur'd Tricks with the ambitious and aspiring. Sometimes the Omission of a *Ceremony* displaces a *Courtier*; at other Times the Artifice of a *Rival* hatches a *Misdemeanor*, and procures an *Impeachment*: Sometimes the *Humour* of a Nation turns Tail upon the Politics of a *Royal Favourite*; at other Times the *Death* of his Sovereign delivers him over to the Fury of his Successor.

Thus

Thus have your *Achitophels* and *Ma-* Sermon  
*chiavels* been treated, and your experi- VIII.  
enc'd Chancellors and Prime *Ministers* of  
*State* reduced to Infamy and Beggery:  
Your Nobility has been degraded, and  
your ancient Families fallen into Decay;  
and the *Lands* which were called after  
their own Names, and the *Dwelling-places*  
which were to endure for ever, have moul-  
der'd to Ashes, or become the Possessions  
of *New Favourites*.

This (my Brethren!) is the true State  
of Things in Relation to the Shortness  
and Uncertainty of the sinful Pleasures of  
this World: And the Substance of the  
Argument may be drawn into the follow-  
ing Epitome. Since Life is short, and the  
Enjoyments of Sin make it shorter; since  
our Pleasures must of Necessity terminate  
with our Breath, and many Accidents  
prevent their lasting so long; we cannot  
but applaud *Moses's* Conduct, and think  
his *Faith* rightly actuated by the Confide-  
ration of the momentary Enjoyment of  
Sin. For it is no great Wonder or No-  
velty to see little Minds carried away  
with Show, and vulgar Spirits immers'd  
in Sensuality: But a Man of *Moses's* se-  
vere Virtue and consummate Wisdom,  
must distinguish Pleasures, and have a  
different Gust and Relish of Enjoyments;  
and by the Assistance of Reason, and the  
Influence of Grace, look deeper than  
Earth, and higher than a *Moment*.

Secondly,

Sermon

VIII.

*Secondly, Another Incentive of Moses's Faith, was the cruel and persecuting Temper of the Egyptian Court, which this holy Man could in no wise encourage, or keep Pace with.*

The Profits must be great which the Egyptians receiv'd from the constant Labour of the Hebrews; and the doubling of their Burthens at the present Juncture, by Order of the Government, and the Severity of their Task-masters, must be a prodigious Addition to the Revenue of the Kingdom. Now for Moses not to fall in with the Measures of the Court, and assert to the highest Pitch the Prerogative of Pharaoh, was to act below the Dignity of the Royal Family, and to lessen the Crown which he was designed to wear. The Differences between the Egyptians and Hebrews were strangely widen'd of late, and a King was now on the Throne, who had forgot Joseph, and hated his Posterity. The Multitude of Strangers rais'd Suspicion in the Natives, and the Encrease of their Substance was the Object of Envy, and an Inducement to Persecution. *Come let us deal wisely with them, (says the politic Monarch,) lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that when there falleth out any War, they join also unto our Enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the Land. Accordingly, Fury was let loose upon the People of God, and Persecution stalk'd, with her drawn Sword thro' every Corner of Rameses and Goshen. Every Officer was*



was an *Inquisitor*, and every *Task-master* an *Executioner*. Nothing was decreed at Court, but *Fire and Faggot*; nothing heard in the Country, but *Plunder and Desolation*. O *Moses*! Great was thy *Faith* in this Day of Adversity! Wonderful thy *Zeal*, and surprizing thy *Affection* to thy Brethren! Thy meek and gentle Nature could not justify the Politics of a besotted Court, and strike in with the Measures of a Blood-thirsty Ministry. Honour and Conscience obliged thee to confess thy Parentage, and partake in the Sufferings of thy *Hebrew Brethren*, rather than add *Affliction* to the afflicted, and act the Tyrant upon the People of God.

Sermon  
VIII.

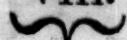
Thirdly, The Promise of God to the Jews was another Motive to raise and elevate *Moses's Faith* to this high Pitch.

Tho' a great many hundred Years had interven'd between the Covenant made with Abraham, and the Slavery of the *Israelites in Egypt*; yet Providence was neither unjust or insolvent, neither forgetful of the Obligation, or defective in the Performance. For God was faithful who had promis'd; and *Moses* in Strength of these Promises, feared not the Wrath of the King of Egypt, but was constant and enduring, as seeing him that is invisible. Had *Moses* depended upon the Honour of *Pharoah*, and presum'd by his own personal Interest to effect the Deliverance of his Brethren; he would have quickly found himself balk'd in his Expectations, and

Hebr. x. 25.

xi. 27.

Sermon  
VIII.



and miserably impos'd upon by the Craft of the *Egyptians*. For the After-Shuffles and Evasions of *Pharoah*, his Grants and Resumptions, his Orders for the March, and Counter-Orders for the Stay of the *Israelites*, shew us what *Confidence there is to be put* in the Words of some *Princes*, and what Reliance on the extorted Promises and courtly Vows of their hungry Officers.

Well then might *Faith* make a Stand, and look about her; summon in her Courage, and try her Interest with another *Monarch*: Well might she raise her Head, and extend her Expectations; take a larger Compass and an higher View; and by contemplating the Properties and Perfections of the Godhead, see where to cast the Anchor of her Hope, and upon what sure Footing to expect

Num. xxiii.  
19.

*Assistance. For God is not a Man, that he should lie, neither the Son of Man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* His Mercy allures the Creatures to Obedience, and his Justice declares upon what Terms they stand with their Maker: His Veracity is the Hinge of our Hopes and Fears, and his Immutability the Prop of our Constancy and Perseverance. Oh! then be

Joh. xx. 27.

*not faithless, but believing: Let your Expectation rise like the high Mountains, and your Confidence in God be as impene- trable as the Rocks. Cast your Care upon him that careth for you, and in all your*

1 Pet. v. 7.

*Distresses*

*over the Glories of this World.*

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Distresses have an Eye to that Being, with whom is *no Variableness, or Shadow of turning.* Sermon VIII.

*Fourthly,* The last and principal Thing which might invigorate the Faith of *Moses*, was, that *Recompence of Reward which he had Respect unto.* Ja. i. 17.

This Passage has given Birth to two excellent Discourses in our own Language, and has been strenuously and successfully argued against those, who upon some speculative and high-flown Notions of the *Love of God*, and a false Interpretation of that common Aphorism, *Virtue is its own Reward*, have unwarily asserted, that to have our Worship determin'd by a *Prospect of Reward*, is a "mercenary and slavish Principle, and an "Indulgence only allow'd to weak Believers; but that the compleat Christian commences his Obedience entirely upon the Love of Duty it self, "abstracted from all Regard to any following Advantages whatsoever. Wilkin's Sermon. I. South. V. 4.

I have not now Time to enter upon this Controversy, or Abilities to add any Thing after such masterly Pens: To transcribe their Works would be Presumption, and to mangle 'em would be Folly. I shall therefore take the Words in their obvious and literal Signification, and from the Arguments alledg'd by the foremention'd Persons, suppose *Moses*, Ἀποβλέπων εἰς τὴν μετὰ τοῦ θανάτου, to have his Eye fix'd upon the Heavenly Mark, and his Faith actuated by the Prospect of some future



Sermon future Advantage. He knew that Success would crown his Labours, and a bounteous God would repay his Sufferings. The Master whom he served was in a better Capacity to promote him than all the Potentates of Earth possibly could be, and Religion had instructed him how to wait his Leisure, and depend upon his Veracity. The *Reward* which was allotted him was both *temporal* and *eternal*, and so must infinitely over-balance what was only for a short Duration in this World. The *temporal Reward* was to commence in the future Enjoyment of the *Land of Canaan*, which was promis'd to *Abraham* several hundred Years ago, and was now speedily to be assigned over to his Posterity: The *eternal Reward* was to succeed the Death of *Moses*, and to be conferr'd upon him in Heaven; where he was to be adorn'd with a Crown of greater Value than that of *Egypt*; where he was to be adopted into the Family of the Almighty, a far more honourable Relation than that of *Pharaoh's Daughter*; where he was to enjoy the Presence of all his renowned Ancestors of the *Jewish Nation*, and to sit down with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, in the Kingdom of God.

This, and a great Deal more than Words are able to express, or Thought is capable of conceiving, was to be the *Recompence of his Reward*; and it was certainly great and noble enough to vanquish the Allurements and Temptations of

*over the Glories of this World.*

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of Sin, and provoke his Disdain and Aversion to earthly Grandeur.

Sermon  
VIII.

FOURTHLY, I am to shew how the several Instances of *Moses's* Behaviour in the Text, may be serviceable towards the Regulation and Government of our Lives.

Altho' the Example of *Moses* is alledged by the Apostle to fortify the primitive Christians against some impending Dangers which they were at present threatned with, and the Peace of the Church was after some *Centuries* so wisely settled, that the Faithful had little Experience of Persecution; yet forasmuch still as Temptations are essential to this uncertain State of Life, and every one in his private Capacity meets with some Crosses and Disappointments; we have Reason to conclude, that the historical Arguments of Scripture were not only calculated for the *primitive Times*, but *are also written for our Admonition upon whom the Ends of the World are come.* I Cor. X. II.

Our Circumstances are oftentimes perplex'd, and our Minds are uneasy; our Faith has Need of a Spur, and our Patience requires a Support; and if the Example of *Moses* can be any ways serviceable to us, we ought to make a due Application of it to the several Parts both of an *active* and *passive* Life.

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VIII.

We are to consider Mankind placed in this World as *Servants* and *Labourers*; and under an indispensable Obligation of performing several Duties both to God and their Neighbour. During the Time of their *Service*, they are permitted the Liberty of acquiring and enjoying the Conveniencies and Pleasures of Earth, as far as they are consistent with Religion, and necessary for the Strengthening and Support of Nature in the Exercise of her respective Functions.

But here Corruption too often gets the Ascendant, and the Use of the Creature is turn'd into Luxury and Wantonness. Riches are apt to dazzle the Eyes, and Pleasure to ensnare the Heart; Affluence and Superfluity are esteem'd the necessary Supports of some Titles; Exaction, and Oppression, the honourable Perquisites of other Stations.

But to restrain these Exorbitances, and reduce Things to their first Institution, we may from *Moses's* Behaviour in the midst of Greatness and Pleasure, learn the following Things for the Management of our selves.

*First*, For how long Time, and under what Restraints, we may hold a plentiful Fortune, and an high Station.

*Secondly*, Not to court those Honours and Preferments, which can't be obtained by just Actions, and kept with a safe Conscience.

*Thirdly*,



over the Glories of this World.

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Thirdly, To use all the Power and Interest, which our Stations intitle us to, for the Support of the Church and People of God.

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VIII.

First, Then the Example of *Moses* may teach us for how long Time, and under what Restraints, we may hold a plentiful Fortune and an high Station. For we don't find that *Moses*, out of any Sullenness of Temper or Averſion to Honour, diſrepected the Princess which preſerv'd his Life, or fell foul upon the Court which advanced his Fortunes; but he continued in Favour, and maintained his Station till the 40th Year of his Age: And from hence we may learn that Greatness and Honour are not in themselves criminal, neither is there any Post which God or Man has ordain'd, but may be lawfully accepted of, as long as it can be holden with Innocence, or executed with Honour. It is our covetous Desires, our tyrannical Abuses, and our vain Confidence in earthly Things, that turn them to Snares and Curses to us. In the Cases of Wealth and Grandeur therefore, we must be beware of Temptations, and guard against Excesses. For Power was not designed to oppress, nor Pleasure to enervate: Bread was given to *strengthen the Heart*, but not to *surfeit the Stomach*; Wine to *cheer the Countenance*, but not to *intoxicate the Head*: Variety may adorn the Table, and Musick heighten the En-

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Sermonertainment, but Plenty must not transform Men into Brutes, nor Mirth render them Buffoons and Mad-men. But,

VIII.

*Secondly*, A greater Use of the Example of *Moses* is to teach us not to court those Honours and Preferments, which can't be obtain'd by just Actions, or kept with a safe Conscience.

This Advice may be of admirable Use both to *Court* and *Country*, and may prove serviceable as well in the *Cabinet* and *Camp*, as at the *Bar* and in the *Pulpit*. For in all Matters of Church and State, the Welfare of Religion should direct the *Divine*, and the Preservation of the Constitution influence the *Statesman*. Whoever acts upon different Views, and would advance his Interest by contrary Practices, will find Disquietude and Remorse in his present Advancement, and Shame and Confusion in his future State. For it is not the Splendour and Income of a Place which can article for Contentment, or purchase Happiness. It is not sumptuous Fare and soft Lodging, full Bags and a numerous Attendance, which can stop the Mouth of the Accuser within, or quell the Uproar of a distracted Mind. If Men owe their Riches to their Vices, or have sacrificed their Conscience to the Advancement of Honour, you may as easily appease the Raging of the great Deep, and command the Winds and Tempests to cease, as to introduce a Calm into their guilty Breasts, or settle  
 Repose

Repose in their raving Souls. The betraying of the *Faith* will make the *Lawn* sit uneasy upon the Loins of the *Prelate*, and the perverting of Justice will turn the *Scarlet* of the *Judge* into Sackcloth: The selling or impoverishing of his Country will occasion wearisome Days and frightful Nights to the *Statesman*; and Murder and Devastation will force the Crown to totter on the Head, and the Scepter to tremble in the Hand of the *Monarch*.

What shall we say then to your Parricides and Robbers; to those who gain by their Exaction, and purchase their Honour by Impiety?

What shall we say of that *Roman Princess*, who murdered her Husband to marry her Brother-in-Law, and assassinated her Father to advance her Husband to the Throne, and then to compleat her Villanies, (*ut virum Regem saluaret, supercruentum patrem, vecta carpento, consternatos equos egit,*) that she might carry her Spouse, with the more Speed, the News of his Kingdom, she drove her Chariot over the Corps of her Father weltring in Blood, and almost gasping for Breath?

Tullia.

Flor. lib. 1.  
c. 7.

What shall we say, moreover, of that Monster, who waded to a perpetual Dictatorship by the Proscription of so many noble Citizens of Rome?



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What, of that more successful Tyrant, who over-turn'd the ancient Government of his Country, and establish'd the Imperial Dignity by Rapine and Murder?

Lastly, What Horror and Indignation must rise in our Minds at the Thoughts of that *Usurper* of our own Nation, who bound Kings in Chains, and Nobles in Links of Iron, and trampled both upon our civil and ecclesiastical Rights, for the Advancement of himself and his Family?

If the Foundation of Empire is to be laid in Blood, and the Continuance of Grandeur to be supported by Cruelty, *Moses* did well to retire from the Court, and to relinquish his Pretensions to a Crown: And if, in like Manner, Men in lower Stations can't make their Honour and their Conscience unite, but must suffer new and disgraceful Articles to be rack'd to their Offices, and secret Services made the Condition of their Promotion; then the Tenure is precarious, and the Compliance criminal; to retire is Prudence, and to be disgrac'd is honourable.

Thirdly, I am to see what Influence the Example of *Moses* ought to have upon those in high Stations, to use their Power and Interest for the Support of the Church and People of God.

The whole History of *Moses's* negotiating and transacting in *Egypt*, as recorded in the Book of *Exodus*, and glanced upon in this *Chapter*, do abundantly demonstrate that it was his principal Aim, both by Solicitations and Messages, by Petitions and Attendance, to effect the Deliverance of his enslaved Brethren. *Kings* are designed by their Office for nursing Fathers, and *Queens* for nursing Mothers of the Church, and all their subordinate Officers are delegated to exercise the same paternal Jurisdiction: The Government of Princes upon Earth resembling in this Respect the Sun in the Firmament, *who rejoices as a Giant to run his daily Course*, that he may cherish and enliven the lower World, and then communicates some Share of his Rays and Influence to the *Moon and Stars who rule in his Absence*.

Power was never given for the *Destruction*, but the *Edification* of the Community; and woe be to them that pervert the Design of the Donor, and glory in the Overthrow and Oppression of Innocence. The People of God have a more than ordinary Right to the Protection of his Vice-gerents, and their Persons are oftentimes contemptible, and their Circumstances deplorable, to try the Virtues, and influence the Compassion of their Superiors.

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VIII.

Matt. viii.

Luke xi. 35.

What our Saviour says to his Disciples in Relation to their Stations and Authority in the Church, is of equal Truth in Reference to all Persons in their civil Capacities: *Ye are the Light of the World; take Heed that the Light which is in you be not Darknefs.* For you have no Commission to put your Candle under a Bed, or in Buskel; but to communicate the Heat, and diffuse the gracious Influence to all that are within the Sphere of your acting. *Amen.*

*Now to God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, &c.*



*The Nature of Carefulness, stated  
and applied.*

A

S E R M O N

Preached at

B A T H.

PHIL. iv. 6.

*Be careful for Nothing : But in every  
Thing by Prayer and Supplication  
with Thanksgiving, let your Requests  
be made known unto God.*

**N**otwithstanding the Orthodoxy  
of our Principles, and our great  
Zeal for the Honour of our  
God, and the Prosperity of his Church ;  
we may be still deficient in our Practice,  
and wanting in some of the most neces-  
sary and fundamental Points of the Chri-  
stian Religion. The most exalted Faith

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is

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*is dead without good Works; the Devotion of a Saint is of no Prevalence without a moral Life, nor the Acknowledgment of Providence consistent with a vain Confidence in our selves.*

What an Happiness, therefore, would it be for Men not to separate those Duties which shine most beautifully in Conjunction! nor to rest in the bare outward Profession of some doctrinal Points, without a more particular and vigorous Application of them towards the Conduct and influencing of their own Actions.

There is no one Thing which God and his Prophets under the *Old Testament*, and our Saviour and his Apostles under the *New*, do more frequently inculcate, and more earnestly endeavour to impress upon the Minds of Men, than the Super-Intendency of Providence, and the Care and Inspection of a superior Being: And yet the Generality of Mankind (who profess the Belief of a Deity) entertain such loose and unworthy Notions of his governing the World, that they ascribe too much to Chance and Fortune, or arrogate infinitely more than is due to their own selves. Hence it is, that *those who go down to the Sea in Ships, and occupy their Business in great Waters*, do rather impute a fortunate Voyage and rich Merchandise to their Skill and Experience in naval Affairs, than to that over-ruling Power which influences the Winds, and calms the Sea, and with an even Hand steers the Pilot *to the Haven whither he would*.

*stated and applied.*

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would go. The *ambitious* Man thinks Honour to be the Purchase of his own Worth and Virtue, and the *Politician* would have the Management of Kingdoms and Empires to be the Effects of his peculiar Insight into Men and Business. The *Heroe* glories in an *Arm of Flesh*, and fancies that the Laurels which adorn his Brows, are the due Reward of his personal Valour and Conduct. The *covetous* Man is enamour'd with Thrift, and doats upon Usury, and thinks no Body can be poor and unfortunate, but he who wants an Head to contrive, and an Hand to manage the Opportunities of Gain.

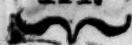
But in all these Instances, there is a manifest Distrust of Providence, as well as too conceited an Opinion of our own Abilities; and if Men would be wise to any good Purposes, and act upon such Principles as would, in all Probability, produce the most lasting Effects, they should rely more upon a *first*, and less upon *second Causes*, and impute the Glory and Honour of every Enterprize to God, and take the Shame and Disgrace of every Disappointment to their own selves. For it is the Almighty Arm alone which can actuate and invigorate human Means, and without his divine Assistance the best-concerted Measures will balk our Expectations, and the most deep-laid Stratagems will fail of their desired Success.

What



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What we have, therefore, principally to do, is by *Prayer and Supplication* to engage the Almighty on our Side, and to depend entirely upon his Wisdom and Goodness for the happy Event and Prosperity of Things.

As to our own Parts, we are only to look upon our selves as Instruments in the Hands of Providence, and not to presume upon our own personal Strength and Ability, without the divine Aid and Concurrence.

And then, as for the Things of this World (which we are generally so eager and intent upon) we must consider the Design of their Creation, the Shortness of their Duration, and the Uses which they are made for; and from hence learn to curb our Passions, and moderate our Desires, and in all our Distresses and worldly Encumbrances to refer our Case solely to that infinite Wisdom, which knows what is better for us than we possibly can do for our selves, and to applaud that unsearchable Goodness which may either *bestow* or *suspend* Favours upon such Grounds and Motives, as we are not capable at present of looking into,

*Be careful for Nothing: But in every Thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God.*

From the Words I propose to discourse of Two Things.

FIRST,

FIRST, A Prohibition against Care and Solicitude for the Things of this World; *Be careful for Nothing.*

SECONDLY, An Application to be made to a superior Power, in all our Difficulties, Wants, and Afflictions; *In every Thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God.*

The former of these Heads will take up the greatest Part of that Time which is commonly allotted for Discourses of this Nature, and the latter shall be only briefly insisted upon, by way of Inference and Deduction from what has been before treated of.

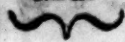
FIRST, Here is a Prohibition against Care and Solicitude for the Things of this World; *Be careful for Nothing.* And for the due stating of this Point, we must see to what Instances this Prohibition does not extend, as well as to what it does.

*First*, It does not extend to a lawful and honest *Calling*.

*Secondly*, It does not extend to the Discouragement of *Labour* and *Industry* in this *Calling*.

*Thirdly*, It does not extend to the Discountenance of *Thrift* and *Frugality*.

*Fourthly*,



# The Nature of Carefulness,

*Fourthly*, It does not extend to a prudent Provision for our respective Families.

*First*, The Injunction in the Text against *Carefulness*, is not supposed to hinder us from putting our selves into an honest *Calling* or Profession, by the Exercise of *which* we may procure a Subsistence or Maintenance in this World.

As God has introduced us upon Earth to inhabit and dwell there for a certain limited Time; so it is reasonable to conclude that all Things which are conducive to the End of good Living, and which are no Ways prohibited by our Lord and Maker, are not only *lawful*, but *expedient* and *necessary* for us in this State of Pilgrimage and Imperfection. For as the several Parts of the *natural Body* have their distinct Offices and Functions, and every Limb contributes something towards the Support of the whole; so the Occupations and Employments of this World are ordained for the mutual Benefit of Mankind, and every *manual* and *liberal* Art advances the Good of the Community, and administers to the Subsistence of the private Artificer. Nature and Providence put the *first Man* upon *Tilling the Earth and subduing it*, and the Conveniences and Necessities of Life obliged the succeeding Generations to *build Towns, plant Vineyards, and wall in Cities*. In Progress of Time, we find Arts increasing as the World grew more populous



populous and indigent, and then *Travel* Sermon  
*and sailing* into distant Parts; Traffic and IX.  
 Commerce with foreign Nations, were

found requisite and advantageous for the  
 Support and Credit of our native Coun-  
 try. The same Intercourse and Corre-

spondence, the same Distinction and Va-  
 riety of Offices are necessary to be main-  
 tain'd in our Days. There are some

Persons who employ their Time in the  
 difficult and laborious Exercises of the  
 Brain, and endeavour to pursue Know-

ledge thro' all her mysterious and intri-  
 cate Windings and Labyrinths. There

are Others who glory in the Goad, and Ecclus.  
 give their Mind to making of Furrows; xxxviii 25,  
 whose Talk is of Husbandry and Bullocks, 26, 27, 28,  
 and whose Ears are accusom'd to the 30.

Bleating of Sheep, and the Lowing of Oxen.

Every Carpenter and Work-master laboureth  
 Night and Day; and they that cut and

grave Seals, are diligent to make great Va-  
 riety, and give themselves to counterfeit

Imagery, and watch to finish a Work. The  
 Potter fashioneth the Clay with his Arm,

and boweth down his Strength before his  
 Feet. The Smith sitteth by the Anvil, and

considereth the Iron Work: The Vapour of  
 the Fire wasteth his Flesh, and he fighteth

with the Heat of the Furnace: The Noise  
 of the Hammer and the Anvil is ever in his

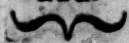
Ears, and his Eyes look still upon the Pat-  
 tern of the Thing that he maketh; he setteth

his Mind to finish his Work, and watcheth  
 to polish it perfectly.

Now

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IX.



Eccles.

xxxviii. 32,

33, 34.

Now these and such like *manual* Occupations must be practis'd in the World, and the Preservation and Happiness of Societies do, in a great Measure, depend upon the Toils and Drudgery of the common People. The several Mechanics here mentioned may not, perhaps, be qualified for Politicians and Generals, and would make but an odd Appearance at the Bar, or in the Pulpit; but their Care, in a lower Station, is laudable, and their Labours are absolutely useful for the Good of Mankind. *They shall not* (says the Son of Sirach) *be sought for in public Council, nor sit high in the Congregation: They shall not sit in the Judges Seat, nor understand the Sentence of Judgment: They cannot declare Justice and Judgment, and they shall not be found where Parables are spoken. But their Desire is in the Work of their Craft, and they shall maintain the State of the World: Without these cannot a City be inhabited, nor the Credit of a Nation supported.* — And this bring me

*Secondly*, To shew more particularly, how the pursuing of the proper Business of our lawful Calling does not come under the Prohibition in the Text of being *careful for Nothing*.

It has been always a Rule amongst Commentators, so to explain and interpret one Text of Scripture, that it may not clash and interfere with another; and upon this Principle, the general Precept in the Text about *Carefulness* must have its particular Restriction, or else it will flatly

flatly contradict all those Exhortations to *Industry* and *Labour*, which we commonly meet with amongst inspir'd Writers. Sermon IX.

*Solomon* hardly finds out any single Virtue throughout all his extensive Knowledge and Experience of the World, upon which he bestows a greater Encouragement than he does upon *Diligence*, not any Vice upon which he more plentifully vents his Satyr, than *Sloth* and *Idleness*. Prov. vi. 6.  
7, &c. c. x,  
4, 5. c. xii.  
11, 24, 27  
ch. xxxiii.  
21 c. xxiv.  
30, 31, &c.

*St. Paul* provokes the several Churches, to whom he addresses his Epistles, to be diligent and laborious, from his own Example: *You, your selves know, that these Hands have ministered unto my Necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all Things, how that so labouring, ye ought to support the Weak, and to remember the Words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive.* Acts xx.  
34, 35, 36.

From these Passages it appears, that *Industry* and *Labour* are so necessary to our Subsistence in this World, that unless we use these Means as Instruments ordained by God to convey his Blessings to Mankind, we are not to expect any Favour or Assistance from Providence.

*Thirdly*, A-kin to this Argument, is that of *Thrift*, which we are so much exhorted to in Scripture, that we cannot suppose the Prohibition against *Carelessness* should vacate our Obligation to this Duty.

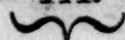
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I know



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I know Thrift is a good Name to excuse one of the worst of Vices, and that the *covetous* Man and *Extortioner* do oftentimes borrow the sanctified Mask and Disguise of it, to patronize their Sordidness and Exaction under: But by "*Thrift*, I mean such a prudent Management of that Income and Revenue which Providence has bestow'd upon our honest Endeavours and faithful Prayers, as to avoid Prodigality on the one Hand, and Covetousness on the other." And this Thriftiness is not only a Thing barely lawful, or of such an indifferent Nature, that it may be pursued or omitted at Pleasure; but it is a Virtue of the strictest Obligation, and the Neglect of it attended with the most pernicious Consequences: For without this Providence of Frugality, it is impossible for us to be eminent in our Holy Profession, or perform the most essential and distinguishing Duties of Christianity. If Men were luxurious, prodigal, or Sluggards, what would quickly become of those Estates which their prudent Ancestors have raised, and what competent Measures would be left for the Discharge of Hospitality, Beneficence, and Charity? The World would be all Vagabonds and Beggars, and instead of long supporting or relieving one anothers Necessities, Men must contentedly lie down at last under the Burden, and starve for Company.

It

It is not therefore to be suppos'd that Sermon  
an honest *Thrift* or *Frugality* is any Ways IX.  
included under that sinful *Care*, which is  
forbidden by St. *Paul* in the Text. —

Neither

*Fourthly*, Is the Provision for our Chil-  
dren out of those respective Revenues  
which God has been pleased to allow us,  
nor the lessening of our Expences accor-  
ding to the Numerousness of our Fami-  
lies, at all concerned or affected by this  
Prohibition.

We are not to fret and murmur, be-  
cause Things do not succeed according  
to our Desires and Expectations; neither  
are we to think that we have nothing  
else to do, but to *rise early, and sit up  
late, and eat the Bread of Carefulness*, that  
we may ennoble our Families, and make  
our Children great and wealthy: But still  
we are to take all legal Opportunities of  
advancing our selves, and improving our  
Circumstances for the Sake of those  
whom we have brought into this World;  
and if any Man by Sloth or Idleness  
neglects the happy Junctures of encreas-  
ing his Substance, or by Riot and Drun-  
kenness wastes his Patrimony or Inheritance,  
such an One is unworthy of the Name  
of a Father, and is no better than a  
Thief and a Robber to his Family.  
What St. *Paul* particularly asserts in re-  
lation to Widows may well be extended  
to other *Relations*, and concludes with a  
violent Force against such Parents as ne-  
glect their Children: *If any one provides* 1 Tim. v. 8.

Sermon not for his own, and especially those of his  
 IX. own House, he hath denied the Faith, and  
 is worse than an Infidel. — But,

Secondly, As I have considered what Care is lawful, so am I to point out to you what Care is sinful; and by Consequence inconsistent with the Doctrine of St. Paul in the Text, as well as other Prohibitions in Holy Writ.

First, If we consult the Original, we shall find the Word to be *μεριμνάτε*, which the Grammarians derive from a Theme which signifies to divide; and so the Care forbidden in the Text is that dividing, distracting, and anxious Care, which hurries and tosses the Mind to one Side and the other, and keeps it, like the troubled Sea, in a perpetual Foam and Agitation. This Care unlooses our Hold from Providence, pushes the Soul from her Centre of Rest, and shakes the Foundations of all Religion and Piety. No Man can doubt of the Sinfulness of this Care, who does but reflect upon that *Patience, Humility, Calmness, and Resignation*, which by the Terms of the Gospel we are under such an indispensable Obligation to know and practice. For how can we, in the midst of these Perplexities or Distractions, be *stedfast and unmoveable* in Adversity? Nay, how can we receive the Gales of Prosperity, without some ungodly Jealousies and Suspicions? Or, how can we enjoy any Portion of present Happiness, without a Diffidence and Mistrust of future Evils and Contingencies?

Anxi-



Anxious Care will be always uppermost Sermon  
in our Thoughts, will always mingle it IX.  
self with our private Concerns, and sub-  
ject us to that *Fear which betrays the* Wisd. xvii.  
*Succours of Reason*, and undermines the <sup>12.</sup>  
Foundations of Providence.

*Secondly*, Another Care which is sinful,  
is *that* which engrosses too much of our  
Time, and intrenches upon more neces-  
sary and important Duties.

As this Earth was never intended for  
the fix'd Place of our perpetual Abode,  
so all Expence of Time as well as Solici-  
tude of Mind for the fading Convenien-  
cies of Life, is inconsistent with the De-  
sign of our Creation, and the Shortness  
of our Pilgrimage with Dust and Ashes.  
This World was made to exercise and  
discipline us for another, and all the En-  
joyments of it are but for the Support  
and Maintenance of our present Beings  
in Subordination to a future and better  
State. We are *fed, and cloathed, and pro-  
tected* here, that we may *work the Work  
of him that sent us*, and proceed in the  
several Duties of Religion with Vigour  
and Sincerity: But when we are too in-  
tent upon the Conveniencies of our Ac-  
commodations, and neglect the principal  
Concerns of our Embassy, we shamefully  
misapply our Time, and our Care degene-  
rates into foolish Sordidness, and de-  
testable Ingratitude.

*Thirdly*, That *Care is sinful*, which  
places too much *in our own selves*, and  
relies upon our personal Abilities for the

Sermon Accomplishment of any Designs. For  
 IX. since Man is in his own Nature a weak  
 and indigent Creature, *and not able of  
 himself to help himself*, but all his Strength  
 and Sufficiency is from a superior Agent,  
 it is ridiculous to suppose that human  
 Wisdom and Fore-cast should effect any  
 Thing without the Permission and Con-  
 currence of the Almighty. As we are  
 Instruments in the Hands of Providence,  
 we are bound (as I observed before) to  
 proceed in those Ways which his Good-  
 ness has prescrib'd us: But to think that  
 our Care should be the efficient Cause of  
 any worldly Prosperity, is an atheistical  
 Opinion, and highly derogatory to all  
 the Christian Notions of a God and his  
 Providence.

*Fourthly, That Care is sinful* which is  
 attended with *immoderate Desires*: For  
 we are to suffer every one to have a  
 free Possession and Enjoyment of what  
 he has a lawful Title to, and not to plot  
 or contrive how to encroach upon his  
 Patrimony, purloin his Goods, or filch  
 away his *Vineyard*.--- But there is the  
 less Occasion to expose this inordinate  
 Care, because it is so contrary to the  
 Rules of common Justice and Honesty,  
 and so nearly allied to that Covetous-  
 ness and Exaction, which the Laws of  
 Nature as well as Religion, detest and  
 abominate.

*Fifthly, That Care is sinful*, which oc-  
 casions any *Discontent* or *Murmuring* upon  
 any bad Success and Disappointment in  
 our

our worldly Concerns. The Event of Sermon  
Things being entirely in God's Hands, IX.

he expects Acquiescence from his Creatures under all his Dispensations, and esteems all fretting and repining, an Arraignment of his Wisdom, and an Invasion of his Power. There is nothing more remarkable throughout the whole Course of God's Government of the *Jewish* Nation than the Judgments he inflicted upon murmuring and discontented Persons; and if we, like them, will *take too much upon our selves*, and suffer our Care to vent it self in any angry and unseemly Remonstrances, we must expect to endure the same Punishments which were laid upon our Fore-fathers Backs. *If we tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, we may be destroyed of Serpents: If we murmur, as some of them also murmured, we may be destroyed of the Destroyer: For all these Things happened unto them for Examples; and they are written for our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come.* 1 Cor. x. 9, 10, 11.

Sixthly, That Care is more eminently *sinful* which excludes the good Providence of God from an Influence over moral Agents, and the Government of human Affairs. God, as a *wise* Being, knows what is convenient for his Creatures; as a *just* Being, will be punctual in the Performances of his Promises; and as a *merciful* Being, will compassionate and assist the Indigent and Afflicted. All that the *Sons of Men* are to do when they are



Sermon  
IX.

press'd with any Difficulty, is to perform the Conditions required by God for the obtaining of Blessings, and then to leave the Issue and Event of Things in the Hand of a *wise, just, and merciful* Providence.

Our blessed Lord has so fully and largely handled this Subject in his Sermon on the *Mount*, that I need not at present recite any more Scriptures to you, but only refer you to the Perusal of that Part of his most admirable Discourse, which is recorded in the *Sixth* of *St. Matthew*, from *v. 25th* to the End of the Chapter.

Now the main Drift our Saviour's reasoning in this Place seems to be this:

That since God has given us *Life*, which is the principal Thing, he will not be wanting in those subordinate Means (such as are *Food* and *Raiment*) which are proper for its Maintenance and Preservation. If any doubts of this divine Indulgence and Benignity, he may be soon convinced from his own Experience, by considering the *Fowls of the Air*, and the *Lillies of the Field*, which are not only supported with Necessaries without any Providence or Fore-cast of their own, but adorned with more beautiful Plumes and native Fragrancy than the most illustrious Monarch of the World, can in all his Robes and Grandeur, pretend to.

If God, therefore, is so indulgent to a *Bird of the Air*, which is created only for the Service of Man; if God is so boun-

bountiful to a *Flower of the Field*, which fades and perishes in a Day or two, shall he not be much more careful of a Creature, which is endued with Reason, and made after his own Image, and designed to continue and cohabit with the Deity itself to all Eternity, Sermon IX.

Then *Fear not*, ye Off-spring of Heaven: Lift up your Eyes, ye ransom'd of the Lord: For ye are of more Value than all other sublunary Beings; Ye are of higher Estimation in the Eyes of your Sovereign, than all the gaudy and pompous Appearance of a vain-glorious World. *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green Pastures: He leadeth me beside the still Waters. Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil: For thou art with me, thy Rod and thy Staff comfort me. To God, therefore, as an indulgent Father, and a faithful Creator, will I commit the Custody of my Soul, the Government of my Body, the Management of my Fortune, and the sole Disposal of all my Affairs.—* And this brings me in the Ps. xxiii. 1, 2, 3.

SECOND and last Place to shew, That the best and safest Way to avoid all mistrustful Thoughts and unnecessary Solitude, is by making our Application to a superior Power; *In every Thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God.*

Made

Sermon

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*Made known unto God!* Not but that God is privy to all our Concerns, and intimately acquainted with the most secret Springs of our very Thoughts and Desires: And far be it from us to suppose, that our *much Speaking* can inform Omniscience, that our *babbling Repetitions* can move the Clemency of the Lord of Hosts, or our restless Importunities merit his Favours. However still, a sober and regular Course of Prayer is of admirable Use in this transitory Life, and the most proper Homage of an indigent and dependent Creature. Prayer, if rightly circumstantiated, and duly offered up; if conceived in Humility, and presented with Faith and Resignation, must be highly acceptable to the Father of Mercies and the God of Power. Prayer is the Condition upon which God has promis'd to bestow his Favours upon the Sons of Men; and the Force and Prevalency of it is so great, that the most surprizing and miraculous Things have been effected by its Aid. *Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Daniel*, and others are memorable Instances of this Doctrine, who by the Power of their ardent Addresses and Supplications, *subdued Kingdoms, stopp'd the Mouths of Lions, quenched the Violence of Fire, escaped the Edge of the Sword, out of Weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in Fight, turned to Flight the Armies of the Aliens.*

Hebr. xi.

33, 34

Prayer



Prayer is still the stated Method of conveying Blessings, and the only Means on our Part of averting Judgments. Is

Sermon IX.

*any afflicted, let him pray, and a merciful God, who knows his Wants, and is in Ability to succour him, will in due Time make the wisest and best Provision for him. For he hath not despised, nor abhorred the Afflictions of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his Face from him. I sought the Lord (says the Psalmist) and he heard me, and delivered me from all my Fears: I called upon him in my Distress, and the Lord answered me, and set me in a large Place.*

Ps. xxxiv.  
+ cxviii. 3.

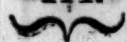
It is much to be wished, that Men, in all their Necessities and Tribulations, would have Recourse to a powerful and omniscient God, and would not presume to extricate themselves by any human Force without his Permission and Concurrence. It were much also to be wish'd, that Men would be patient for a Time, and not shew any Uneasiness or Despondency, because their Petitions are not granted as soon as they are preferr'd: For we may rest secure, that a just God is not slack concerning his Promises, and a wise Being sees good Reason to defer his Favours for a Time. The Grant stands still good to us and our Posterity, *All Things whatsoever ye shall ask in Prayer, believing, ye shall receive. Ask, and it shall be given you: Seek, and ye shall find: Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*

Matt. xxii.  
22.  
c. vii. 7.

Lastly,

Sermon

IX.



*Lastly, Another requisite to Prayer, is Thanksgiving; by which I understand the returning of Praise to Almighty God for all the Evil as well as Good that we receive from his Hands: For God is to be praised even for the Afflictions which he lays upon us, because they are sent with a merciful Design of correcting and amending our Lives, and of weaning our Affections and Desires from the fading Enjoyments of this World. Shall we receive Good (says Job) at the Hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive Evil? It is good for me (says Holy David) that I have been afflicted: For before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy righteous Judgments.*

Wherefore, let us make a sanctified Use and Improvement of all the Tribulations and Distresses which Providence shall think fit to exercise us with; and let us consider, that as the Lord hath given, so the Lord may take away, and in all his wondrous Works and Dispensations, we should bless the Name of the Lord. Amen.

*Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Three Persons but one eternal God, be rendred and ascribed all Honour, Might, Majesty, Dominion, and Adoration, from henceforth and for evermore. Amen,*

*Of our Knowledge, and Ignorance of God.*

IN TWO  
SERMONS.

JOB xi. 7, 8, 9.

*Canst thou by searching find out God?  
Canst thou find out the Almighty to  
Perfection?*

*It is as high as Heaven, what canst  
thou do? Deeper than Hell, what  
canst thou know?*

*The Measure thereof is longer than  
the Earth, and broader than the  
Sea.*

**T**HERE is nothing which Men *Sermon*  
are generally so intent upon, and *X.*  
nothing that they are more de-  
fective in, than the true and solid Parts of  
Knowledge. The Pursuit of it is labori-  
ous, and the Acquisition uncertain; the  
Marches are hazardous, and the Victory  
doubtful.

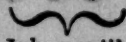


Sermon doubtful. *Much Study is a Weariness to the*  
 X. *Flesh, and of making many Books there is*  
 ~~~~~ *no End.* Learning is not confin'd to a  
 Eccl. xii. Number of Volumes, nor is Wisdom al-
 12. ways to be purchas'd by the most intense
 Application. There are many Rubs and
 Impediments which mortify the *Student*,
 and stop his ambitious Career in the Chace
 of Knowledge. *Dragons* and *Serpents*
 guard the *Golden Fruit*, and the Rock is
 too high and steep to admit an easy
 Ascent.

We have neither *Strength of Mind*,
 nor *Length of Days*, to carry on any con-
 siderable Work for the Advancement of
 Learning; and tho' we had the Vigour
 of the *Patriarchs*, and the Years of the
Ante-Diluvian Fathers, we have Reason
 to fear that our Learning would not ad-
 vance with our *Age*, nor our Improve-
 ment be answerable to our *Duration*.

Your pragmatistical and conceited Per-
 sons may be as curious and inquisitive as
 they please, and, upon the Strength of
 some new *Hypothesis*, endeavour to solve
 all the difficult Appearances of Nature;
 yet, notwithstanding their wise Schemes
 and mighty Pretences, we find in the
 End, that they may baffle their *Reason*
 rather than improve their *Judgment*, and
 do more *Dis honour* to their God than Ser-
 vice to their *Generation*.

Let the *Virtuoso* give a Loose to his
 Fancy, and take the full Liberty of
Thinking; let his *Thoughts* range up to
Heaven and down to *Hell*; let them de-
 scend

scend into the Path which no Fowl know- Sermon
eth, and the Vulture's Eye hath not seen, and X.
there contemplate the Stones of Darkness, 
and the Shadow of Death; yet the Fruit Job xxviii
of his Enquiries will be to discover his
own Ignorance, and his truest Experiment
will be his own Folly. As for Learning,
the Depth says it is not in me, and the Sea
says it is not with me. Where then is this
inestimable Treasure, which is so much
talk'd of? Where is this Jewel of great
Price, which is so mightily pretended
to? Where alas! is Wisdom to be found,
and where is the Place of Understanding?
Man knoweth not the Way thereof; neither
is it to be found in the Land of the Living.

v. 3.

v. 14.

v. 12.

v. 13.

The Philosopher has long ago observ'd,
that the *Essences of Things* lie too deep
for an human Eye to look into; yet the
Sons of Men are for digging after them,
as for *bidden Treasure*, and for carrying
their Searches unto the utmost Corners
and Limits of Nature. For tho' Dark-
ness has obscured our *Intellectual Parts*,
and Ignorance is the cursed Entail upon
the Fall, yet there is a manifest Ambition,
in every Age, to grow *wiser and
wiser*; and Men think their Time ill-
bestowed, if they have not bless'd the
World with some new Discovery. To
go on in the old beaten Tract of Learning,
and to be contentedly ignorant of
what God has ordained that we should
never know, is too great a Curb upon a
refin'd Wit, and an intolerable Imposition
on a *Free-thinker*. For every Smatterer in
Science

Sermon
X.

Science talks contemptibly of Antiquity; and thinks his Ancestors as much *below* him in Learning, as they are *above* him in Years.

But whatever Value, such Men as these, may put upon the Accuracy of their Parts and the Profoundness of their Knowledge; what Applauses soever they may reckon due to themselves for thinking out of the common Road, and carrying their Speculations higher than the Rest of the World; yet Reason will inform us, that Knowledge has its proper Bounds, and Religion will point out some Objects, which are too bright and dazzling for Humanity to look into.

It was too great an Itch after Wisdom, and a Desire of *being as Gods knowing Good and Evil*, that occasion'd the Forfeiture of *Paradise*, and the Ruin of our *First Parents*: And the same vain Curiosity still runs in the Blood of their unfortunate Descendents; the same Affectation of *forbidden Knowledge* still aggravates the *Curse* upon their fallen Posterity.

Gen. iii. 5. Job xi. 12. *Vain Man would be wise, tho' he is born like a wild Asses Colt! Vain Man would be prying into the Secrets of Nature, and tracing out the hidden Ways of Providence, tho' his Eyes are too weak for the Contemplation of Eternity, and his Reason too shallow for the fathoming of divine Truth.*

For canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to Perfection? It is as high as Heaven, what canst

canst thou do? Deeper than Hell, what Sermon
canst thou know? The Measure thereof is X.
longer than the Earth, and broader than
the Sea.

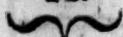
These Words represent to us the Vanity of an inquisitive Temper, and the Defect of our Knowledge in Respect of spiritual Objects; but they are not designed to exclude our Endeavours after the Proof of a Deity, nor to stifle those limited Notions and Apprehensions of the divine Nature and Attributes, which God has thought fit to communicate to us. No; we are to make a right Use and Exercise of our Reason, and to get as fully acquainted with the Object of our Worship as we can: But we are not to suffer our Knowledge to move out of its Sphere, or to presume that a *finite* Being can comprehend the Nature, or account for all the Actions of an *infinite* God.

That I may, therefore, do some Justice to this excellent and lofty Portion of Scripture, I think it proper to proceed after the following Method:

FIRST, To shew what Knowledge we may have of God, and how far we may find him out by searching after him.

SECONDLY, To assign some Reasons why such Searches after, and Knowledge of God, are not improper for us.

THIRDLY,



Of our Knowledge,

THIRDLY, To prove the *Imperfection* of our *Knowledge* in Reference to the divine Nature and Operations, and to shew what an infinite Number of Things there may be that relate to God, which the most knowing Part of Mankind cannot perfectly be acquainted with, or fully account for.

FOURTHLY, To make some practical Improvement of this Doctrine, by dissuading you from a vain Affectation of *forbidden Knowledge*, and a Curiosity and Inquisitiveness into such *high Matters* as no Ways concern you: and withal, by engaging you to apply your selves to those Truths which are plain and obvious to your Reason, and into the Nature and Design of *which*, God has been so far pleased to admit you in this State of Ignorance and Imperfection, as may procure you Ease in this World, and intitle you to Salvation in another.

FIRST, I am to shew what Knowledge we are allowed to have of God, and how far we may find him *but by searching after him*.

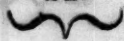
It is impossible to prescribe a certain Degree and Measure of divine Knowledge to distinct and different Persons, and to say of Learning, as the Prophet did of the Ocean, *Hitherto shalt thou come*

come and no farther, and here shall all thy proud Enquiries and pompous Demonstrations be stop'd. For as Perfection in Science is deny'd to human Understanding, and the Reason and *Modus* of some Truths are not to be the Subject of our Enquiries; so even of those Things, which we have the Liberty and Happiness of *Knowing*, the Degree and Progress of our *Knowledge* is, in a great Measure, owing to those Talents and Abilities which God has given us, and the Use and Improvement we have made of them by a due Industry and a right Application. However, we may very safely assert, that the *searching after God* in the Text, does not bound any modest Enquiry, or prohibit our looking into the Proofs for the Being and Existence of a Deity. For these are solid and rational, and will stand the Test of the nicest Examination, and provoke the Scrutiny of the most critical Enquirer. *A Searching*, in this Case, is so far from being a Fault, that it is an indispensable Duty; and the Professors of *Christianity* are obliged to be so much acquainted with the Object of their Worship, and the Principles of Religion, as to be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh them a Reason of the Hope that is in them, with Meekness and Fear. This is what God Almighty does constantly provoke and encourage us to; and St. Paul, in his Dispute with the learned Philosophers of Athens, does not demand

1 Pet. iii. 15

Sermon an *implicit Obedience* to his Doctrine upon his own bare Assertions, but argues

X.



Acts xvii.
27, 28.

for the Existence of the Godhead from the Topicks of Reason, and bids them *seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him: For he was not far from every one of them, in as much as in him they lived and moved, and had their Being.* Religion was never designed to bring a Rust upon our Faculties, or cast a Mist around our Souls, or to patronize Ignorance under a Colour of encouraging Devotion. It may, 'tis true, mortify our Pride, and keep down our Curiosity; but it never pretends to contradict Reason, and abolish true and useful Learning. When once Men give themselves up to Laziness and Stupidity, and suffer a Supineness and Lethargy to over-spread their Souls as well as their Bodies, we can expect nothing but Superstition should reign in our Temples, or else Profaneness and Infidelity be proclaimed in our Streets: But when Men, by Study and Application, endeavour to confirm their innate Notions of a God; and by a Consideration of his Attributes, to apply all possible Perfection to him, they add Life to their Faith, and Vigour to their Practice; do an Honour to their Maker, and procure a Blessing for themselves.

Upon the whole, therefore, we are not to suppose that any general Expressions in *Holy Writ* are design'd to encourage Ignorance and Laziness, in prejudice to Industry and useful Knowledge; or that these Words

in

in particular, *Canst thou by searching find* Sermon
out God, should admit of such a large X.
 and unlimited Acceptation, as to prohi-
 bit all Enquiries into the Existence of a
 Deity, and the Principles of Religion;
 so these Enquiries are in such a *Degree*
 as God has been pleased to communi-
 cate himself to us, and in such *Instances*
 as he requires the Steadiness of our Faith
 and Practice.

And this Truth, I hope, may be yet
 set in a farther Light, by producing the
 Reasons, in the *second Place*, which may
 evince such *Searches after, and Knowledge*
of God, not only proper, but necessary for
 us.—And these are *Three*.

First, The Gift of *Reason*, by which
 we are enabled and directed to search
 after God.

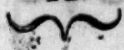
Secondly, The Discoveries which God
 has been pleased to make of himself
 by *Revelation*.

Thirdly, The Worship and Adoration
 which he expects from *rational*
Creatures.

First, God has bestowed upon us the
 Use of *Reason* to look up to him, the
 Author and Giver thereof, and by the
 Strength and Penetration of our natural
 Faculties, to make such Discoveries of
 the divine Nature and Perfections, as may
 establish our Faith, and reflect an Ho-
 nour upon our Maker.

Sermon

X.



Reason has been frequently stiled by the *heathen Poets*, a *Ray*, an *Emanation*, and a *Particle* of the *Deity*, and is asserted, both by their *Orators* and *Philosophers*, to be given as a distinguishing *Badge of Glory* to those *Creatures* who are made after the *Image of God*. * *Sicut aves ad volatum, equi ad cursum, ad seviti- am feri gignuntur; ita nobis propria est mentis agitatio & solertia; unde Origo ani- mi celestis creditur.*

Now though some Men have pervert- ed this noble *Faculty of Reason* to ill Pur- poses, and others have made it usurp the *Throne* of the *Almighty*, and placed it in the *Seat of God*; yet we are not from these *Abuses* to conclude, that a sober Use of it is not to be admitted in re- ligious Matters. We confess *Reason* to be no more than an *Hand-Maid* to in- troduce us into the Presence of a greater *Mistress*, and compared to *Revelation*, 'tis but like the *Glimmerings* of a *Star* to the *Brightness* of the *Sun*. However, it is still the *Candle of the Lord*, which shineth in dark Places, and inlighteneth every one that cometh into the *World*. By the Help of it, the *Heathens* acknowledged a su- preme Being, and some of the more in- telligent Part of them, relinquiſh'd Super- stition and Idolatry, and worshipped the *Unity* of the *Godhead*. The same ra- tional Principle is useful to every one of us who desires to give an Account of

* Quinct. Instit. lib. 1.

his Faith and Practice ; and it is hardly to be imagined why God should bestow such an excellent Gift upon us, unless we were to employ it in the Contemplation of Nature and Providence, that we might fall into a more profound Rapture and Admiration of our great Creator. 'Tis the Fool only who says in his Heart there is no God, and the want of Consideration and Reflection which is the Parent of Scepticism and Infidelity : But he that makes a right Use of his Reason, looks into Causes and Effects, and couples together Antecedents and Consequences, and so will, by a natural Way of Argumentation, run up his Thoughts to a supreme Being and Center in God, *who made all the World, and all Things therein, and giveth to all, Life, and Breath, and all Things.* Acts xvii. 24, 25.

Secondly. Another Argument to prove that God allows our Searches after him, is the Discovery he has been pleased to make of himself by *Revelation*. For if God designed to keep the World in Ignorance and Stupidity, he would never have made such an ample Declaration of his Will and Pleasure, or delivered such an intelligible System of Precepts for the Instruction and Government of Mankind. For by this Means he hath given us greater Evidences that we should *know and serve him*, and kindly conducted us into such pleasant Paths of Knowledge, as are necessary for us to *walk in*. For *Revelation* was designed to refine up-

Sermon on *Reason*, or, at least, to restore it to its proper Use, and to bring it to its primitive Brightness and Lustre. And it does accordingly clear up the Dimness of natural Sight, and rectify the mistaken Notions of Mankind; set off the Object of our Worship with a surprising Grandeur and Majesty; and propose some Mysteries of *Faith*, which are not discernable by the Light of Nature.

These are Things which we are permitted in some Degree to look into, and God's *Revelation* of them is a plain Indication that they were design'd for the Subjects of our Knowledge. For tho' *secret Things belong unto the Lord our God; yet those Things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our Children for ever, that we may do all the Words of this Law.*

Deut. xxix.
29.

But then great Caution is to be used, not to wander any farther in our Searches than we are permitted; nor to proceed one Step in a Mystery, without the special Guidance and Direction of Holy Scripture. For when Men have pretended to be *wise above what is written*, they have fallen into *many dangerous and hurtful Errors*, and given the most deplorable Instances of their Folly and Profaneness. When they have followed their own imaginary *Reason*, in Opposition to *the Wisdom from above*, and the Dictates of the *Spirit*, they have either lost the Knowledge of the *true God*, and suffered his Worship to degenerate into Idolatry, or corrupted the Purity of the *Faith*, and defaced

defaced the Beauty of the Church, by introducing a Multitude of Schisms and Heresies. X.

Thirdly, Our Obligations to worship God will justify our *Searches* after him. God has thought fit to demand of us a *reasonable Service*, which I cannot think how we should be able to pay, without a competent Knowledge of that Being, whom we are to serve. For Knowledge, in all Duties, ought to precede Practice, and was designed for the Ground-Work and Foundation upon which *that* should be regularly built. We must be certain of the Existence of a supreme Being, before we make our Complements and Addresses to him, and be sure that he is a *Spirit* too, before we can *worship him in Spirit and in Truth*. If we are *so foolish* or wicked, *as to think him such an one as our selves*, then all our Approaches to him will be biassed by this unhappy Notion, and we shall endeavour to appease him with such Offerings and Oblations as are most agreeable to our own Lusts and Ambition. Thus whilst the *Heathen* World took their Sentiments of a Deity from his Power and Vengeance, they thought to appease him with human Sacrifices, and to make the *First-born of their Body atone for the Sins of their Soul*. And if we had not the Happiness of knowing something of the divine Nature by a diligent Search into his Attributes, and were not indulged the Liberty of inferring plain and easy Consequences from these

Sermon these Searches, we *might grope for Light*
 X. *at Noon-Day*, and be involved in the
 same superstitious Errors with the *Pagans*.
 Whereas we are *now* guided from above
 in our Addresses, and *know what we wor-*
 ship; we should then float in Uncertain-
 ties, and *worship we know not what*: And
 by Consequence, the misguided Homage
 we pay our God must be the *Sacrifice of*
Fools, instead of the grateful Tribute of
rational Creatures.

John iv. 22.

Having thus endeavour'd to point out
 some Things relating to God, which we
 are capable of *knowing*, and to produce
 the Motives and Inducements which may
 justify our Searches and Enquiries after
such Knowledge, and to prove how far we
 are to be guided both by *Reason* and *Re-*
velation in these and such like Searches
 and Enquiries; I shall now proceed to
 the contrary Part of the Question, and
 produce some particular Instances which
 our Knowledge cannot presume to ar-
 rive unto. *We cannot by searching find out*
the Almighty to Perfection; that is, we
 cannot by any Strength of natural Rea-
 son, by any subtle Enquiries, or deep Pe-
 netration, come to any adequate Notion
 of the divine Nature and Attributes,
 and give a satisfactory Account of all
 God's Operations and Proceedings with
 the *Sons of Men*.

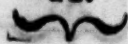
That there is an Almighty, Omnisci-
 ent, Eternal, Omnipresent and Infinite
 Being, who made and governs this World,
 is a Truth discernable by the Light of
 Nature.

Nature, and handed down to us by the concurrent Testimony of all Ages : That this *One Being, or Essence, subsists in Three distinct Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who are Co-eternal and Co-equal* in all the Properties and Perfections of the *Godhead*, is what is farther discovered to us by *Revelation* : But then to give an easy Solution of a *Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity* ; to explain the *eternal Generation* of the *Son*, and *Procession* of the *Holy Ghost*, with several other Difficulties resulting from this adorable Mystery, is what does not come within the Verge of *Reason*, but is only the Province of *Faith*. These are the *deep and hidden Things of God*, which we must *believe* but not *comprehend*, *admire* but not *explain*. For such Knowledge is too wonderful for us, we cannot attain unto it ; such an Insight into the divine Nature is what we must be debarr'd from, 'till we shall be transformed into the divine *Likeness*, and our glorified Eyes shall behold the *Fountain of Light* and Love, as *He is*. We must at present remember, that we walk by *Faith*, and not by *Sight*, and not pretend to a Perfection of Knowledge whilst we sojourn in this dark State of Mortality. Modesty does better become dependent Creatures than Presumption ; and a Distrust of themselves is more agreeable to the present State of their Infirmities, than a proud Confidence, or a swelling Opinion of their own Learning. The *Psalmist*, who was the Favourite of God,

Sermon
X.

Ps. cxxxix.
6.

1 Cor. v. 7.



God, and a Person as much distinguished by the Brightness of his *Parts*, as the Glories of his *Crown*, has given us such a Pattern of Behaviour in this Point, that I cannot but repeat to you those modest and debasing Expressions of himself, which are recorded in the 131st Psalm 1, 2, 3, Verses, *Lord, I am not high-minded, I have no proud Looks. I do not exercise my self in great Matters, which are too high for me. But I refrain my Soul, and keep it low, like as a Child that is weaned from his Mother: Yea, my Soul is even as a weaned Child.*

According to this Example we are to regulate and govern our Minds; and, I think, we need no other Arguments to mortify all needless Curiosities and vain Pretensions to Knowledge, than this *two-fold* Consideration.

First, The Weakness and Deficiency of our Understanding in searching after natural Truths.

Secondly, The Eminence and Transcendency of the divine Nature, and Operations.

Both these Observations are conveyed to us in the two latter Verses of the Text, where the Knowledge of an infinite God is faintly represented by the Height of *Heaven* and the Depth of *Hell*; the Length of the *Earth*, and the Broadness of the *Sea*. For, as Men are generally puzzled in their Speculations of heavenly

heavenly Bodies, and at a Loss in fathom-
ing the *bottomless Pit*; as *Mathe-*
maticians can but imperfectly guess at the
Circumference of the *Globe*, and the vast
Extent of the several Parts of the wide
Ocean; so the Heights and Elevations of
divine Wisdom are imperceptible, the
Lengths of Eternity are inscrutable, and
the Operations of Omnipotence and the
Courses of Providence, are, in some
Cases, incomprehensible.

First, Then, let us see how the Im-
perfection of this our Knowledge, in re-
spect of God, may be gathered from our
Ignorance of natural Truths: *It is as*
high as Heaven, what canst thou do? Deep-
er than Hell, what canst thou know? The
Measure thereof is longer than the Earth,
and broader than the Sea.

Though the Soul was originally de-
signed for Knowledge, and still retains
an impatient Thirst and Desire after it;
yet she is so clouded and darkened by her
Union with the Body, that it fares with
the *Understanding*, as it does with the
Eye; it can look only upon the Superfi-
cies or Outside of Matters, but not pene-
trate into any Thing that is remote or
distant, or be able to trace out the intri-
cate Mazes, and pursue the secret
Doubles and Turnings of Nature. All
compound Beings are forc'd to be dissect-
ed in our Minds, and their several Pro-
perties separated and distinguish'd, before
we can have any Manner of Idea or Con-
ception of them; and after all our Toil
and

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X.



Sermon and Fatigue, after all our speculative

X. Abstractions and practical Experiments,

*we hardly guess aright at the Things that
 Wisd. ix. 16. are upon Earth, and with Labour do we
 find out the Things that are before us; but
 the Things that are in Heaven, who hath
 searched out?*

Tell me, thou vain Creature, who
 makest such mighty Pretences, and proud
 2 Esd. iv. 5. Boasts of thy Wisdom; Canst thou weigh
 me the Weight of the Fire, or measure me
 the Blast of the Wind? Canst thou de-
 e. xxvi. 8. clare, how the Almighty Arm hath shut
 up the Sea with Doors, when it brake forth,
 as if it had issued out of the Womb; and
 bound up the Waters in thick Clouds, and
 the Cloud is not rent under them.

Tell me, O thou Pretender to the Se-
 crets of Nature, Hath the Rain a Father?
 Jo. xxxviii. 28, 29. Or who hath begotten the Drops of Dew?
 Out of whose Womb came the Ice? And the
 hoary Frost of Heaven, who hath engen-
 dered it?

But if these Things, which are in some
 Measure obvious to thy Senses, are so
 puzzling to thy Understanding; What Ac-
 count wouldst thou give, should I lead
 thee a little deeper into Nature, and be
 inquisitive into Things which are remote
 and distant from thy Eyes? What wouldst
 1 Esd. iv. 7. thou answer me, should I ask thee how great
 Dwellings are in the midst of the Sea, or
 how many Springs are in the Beginning of
 the Deep, or how many Springs are above
 the Firmament, or which are the Out-goings
 of Paradise? What knowest thou of the
 Situation

Situation of the Sun, or the Influence of Sermon
the Moon? Of the Order of the Stars, X.
and the ballancing of the Clouds?

What Solution wouldst thou give me
upon the Principles of Philosophy, should
I enquire, *how God hath stretched out the* Job xxxvi. 7.
North over the empty Place, and hanged the
Earth upon nothing? What wouldst thou
say, should I demand, *whereupon he hath* c. xxxviii.
fastned the Foundations of the Universe, and 6, 9.
who laid the Corner-stone thereof? How he
hath made the Clouds the Garment of the
Sea, and thick Darknes swardling Bands
for it.

These alas! are Mysteries in Nature,
and tho' they command our Assent, they
surpass our Reason; tho' they are the
Objects of our Belief, they are not al-
ways the Subjects of our Knowledge.
Wonderful are thy Works, O Lord, and in
Wisdom hast thou made them all. Thy
Actions are miraculous, thy Ways un-
searchable, and thy Paths past finding out.
We must not pretend to be wiser in these
Cases than we are designed to be, nor to
dive into abstruse and hidden Causes,
when we can't perfectly solve the com-
mon Occurrences of *Matter and Motion.*
For we may see plainly, there is a De-
fect, since the *Fall*, in our discerning Fa-
culties, and our Passions and Perverse-
ness place us at a great Distance from the
true Reason of Things. *The Thoughts of* ^{Wisd. ix.}
mortal Men are miserable, and our Devices 14, 15.
are but uncertain. For the corruptible Bo-
dy presseth down the Soul, and the earthly
Taberna-

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Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind that museth upon many Things: So that we lie, at present, under sundry and manifold Disadvantages, and are not only confin'd in our Enquiries from *without*, but prejudiced also from *within*. The Object is not plac'd in a proper *Medium*, neither is the Prospect clear, and the Faculties quick and discerning.

Whilst we sojourn in this *Valley of Darkness*, it is impossible that we should approach to *Light inaccessible*, but must
 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12. *know only in Part, and see through a Glass darkly.* A Laziness in searching, and a Rashness in judging, a Perverseness in our Wills, and a Bias upon our Affections, a Prejudice against some Truths, and an Interest in some Errors, will always bewilder the unfortunate *Sons of Men*, and keep them from the Knowledge of Nature as well as the Reason of the Almighty's Actions. And in this Sense the Words of *Solomon*, (who being eminent for his *Wisdom*, and so the more to be hearkened to,) are very pertinent and remarkable, and may serve not only for an Instruction to the *Divine*, but for a Lecture to the *Philosopher*. As thou
 Eccl. xi. 5. *knowest not the Way of the Spirit, nor how the Bones do grow in the Womb of her that is with Child; so thou knowest not the Works of God, who maketh all Things.* For
 Wisd. ix. 13. *what Man is he that knoweth the Counsel of God, or who can think what the Will of the Lord is? What hardy Mortal is it, who dares draw up the Curtain, and look within*

within the Veil? Who with a bold Sermon Front and assuming Air, pretends to be positive and dogmatical about those Things which are envelop'd in Darkness and Obscurity, and lock'd up from human Sight by the *eternal Decrees* of God? Even in such religious Matters as are revealed to us by our Maker, we oftentimes err by the Curiosity of our Speculations, and make our Faith suffer by the Nicety of our Enquiries. What have all the subtle Distinctions of the *Schools* done, but perplex'd Conscience, and puzzled Divinity, and made some Doctrines of Christianity more *incomprehensible*, and the *Trinity* it self a greater Mystery? *Where then is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the proud Philosopher? Where is the quick and smart Disputant? Where are the Virtuoso's and Theorists? The Makers of Worlds, and the Measurers of the Heavens? These Men pretend to know so much of the Mind of the Lord, and to be so intimately acquainted with his Secrets, as if they had been his Counsellors from Eternity, and, (pardon the Lightness of the Expression) had sat by his Elbow, when the Windows of Heaven were open'd, and the Channels of the great Deep broken up: Else why should their busy and impertinent Thoughts rove into what is past and what is to come, and their vain Philosophy account for all the Difficulties of the Deluge, and assign the natural Causes of the last Conflagration?*

X.

1 Cor. i. 20.

Gen. vii. 11.

O

But

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X.

But to all such proud Boasters and empty Pretenders as these are, I shall return the pertinent and admirable Advice of the *Son of Sirach*, in the *Third of Ecclesiasticus*, v. 21, 22, 23, 24th. With the bare Repetition of *which*, I shall conclude this Discourse, and reserve the Rest of the Subject 'till another Opportunity.

Seek not out the Things that are too hard for thee, neither search the Things that are above thy Strength. But what is commanded thee, think thereupon with Reverence: For it is not needful for thee to see with thine Eyes the Things that are in Secret. Be not curious in unnecessary Matters: For more Things are shewed unto thee, than Men understand: For many are deceived by their own vain Opinion, and an evil Suspicion hath overthrown their Judgment.

Now to God the Father, &c.

SERMON

SERMON XI.

JOB xi. 7, 8, 9.

*Canst thou by searching find out God?
Canst thou find out the Almighty to
Perfection?*

*It is as high as Heaven, what canst
thou do? Deeper than Hell, what
canst thou know?*

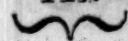
*The Measure thereof is longer than
the Earth, and broader than the
Sea.*

THESE Words are the Expressions of Zophar the Naamathite, one of Job's particular Friends and Visitants; and they are so lofty and moving in respect of the *Diction*, as well as serious and important in reference to the *Matter* couch'd under them, that I thought the Discussion of them would be too large for a single *Sermon*, unless I trespass'd upon your Patience in the Delivery, or pass'd cursorily over some Truths which required a more intent View and distinct Consideration.

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The Words, as they stand in Order and are now read to you, are a severe Reprimand to all assuming and pragmatical Persons, and a mortifying Lecture upon our own Folly and Ignorance. That I might settle the Bounds and Limits of them, and enforce and explain the Doctrine contain'd under them, I thought it necessary to mention to you what was *permitted*, as well as what was *forbidden*, in Relation to divine Knowledge: And in Order thereto, I propos'd this following Scheme to your Consideration.

FIRST, To shew what Knowledge we may have of God, and how far we may *find him out by searching after him*.

SECONDLY, To assign some Reasons why such *Searches after, and Knowledge of God* are not improper for us.

THIRDLY, To prove the Imperfection of our Knowledge in reference to the divine Nature and Operations, and to shew what an infinite Number of Things there may be that relate to God, which the most knowing Part of Mankind can not perfectly be *acquainted with, or fully account for*.

FOURTHLY,

FOURTHLY, To make some practical Improvement of this Doctrine, by dissuading you from a vain Affectation of *forbidden Knowledge*, and a Curiosity and Inquisitiveness into such *high Matters* as no Ways concern you; and withal, by engaging you to apply your selves to those Truths which are plain and obvious to your Reason, and into the Nature and Design of *which* God has been so far pleas'd to admit you, in this State of Ignorance and Imperfection, as may procure you Ease in this World, and intitle you to Salvation in another.

The *two first* of these general Heads I have already dispatch'd, and made an Entrance upon the *Third*; and here I hope you will be pleas'd to consider that I propos'd to argue upon this two-fold Topic, against our *finding out the Almighty to Perfection*.

First, The Weakness and Deficiency of our Understanding in searching after natural Truths.

Secondly, The Eminence and Transcendency of the divine Nature and Operations.

The last of these Particulars is what remains to be discours'd of upon this Occasion; and I hope to give some Light to
O 3 the

Sermon the Argument by considering these five
 XI. Things.

First, The Nature of God in general.

Secondly, Some of his more remarkable Attributes.

Thirdly, The Works of Creation.

Fourthly, The Power of Miracles.

Fifthly, The Course of Providence.

First, I am to prove the Defect of our Knowledge in reference to the divine Nature in general, and to shew how we cannot, in this Respect, by *searching find out the Almighty to Perfection*.

There is no greater Truth than the *Being* and Existence of a God, and no greater Mystery in relation to us, than his *Nature* or *Essence*: And upon this Account, the most learned *Divines* and subtle *Metaphysicians* have been at a Loss, according to the settled Rule of their several Professions, to give us a true Definition of that supreme Being, who is *ὁ θεὸς ὑπερσίστος*, and who (according to St. *Halary*) *Cum dicitur, non potest dici; cum aestimatur non potest aestimari; cum definitur, ipse sua definitione crescit*.

The Height of this divine Subject, and the Lowness of human Capacities, have made all Persons who have any Share of Prudence and Piety, to be cautious and modest in their Expressions about it. For an incomprehensible Being should not only be *approached to*, but *discoursed of*, with the profoundest Reverence

rence and Humility ; and it is more becoming a Christian, in some Measure, to acknowledge his Ignorance of this Object, than to be dogmatical in his Assertions, and critical in his Explications of it. Sermon XI.

But more especially the younger Sort of People, and all Learners and Novices in Religion are to be cautioned against wading out of their Depth, in quest of divine Knowledge, lest they should sink into the Abyss of Error, and perish by the Boldness and Unlawfulness of their Attempts.

St. * *Cyril* was so apprehensive of Danger upon this Occasion, that he gave the most seasonable Advice, in his Lectures to the *Catechumens*, both for the Prevention and Avoidance of it ; and, in one of his high Strains of Rhetorick, styles the very Confession of our Ignorance, the truest and highest Mark of divine Knowledge.

If from the *Fathers* we turn again to the Philosophers, (to whom we are always remitted by our *Free-Thinkers* for fuller Information :) we shall find, that such of them as have been most curious in their Searches, and bold in their As-

* Λέγομεν γὰρ ἔχ' ὅσα διὰ περὶ Θεῶ (μόνον γὰρ αὐτῶ τὰυτὰ γνώριμα) ἀλλ' ὅσα, κεχώρηκεν ἡ ἀνθρώπινη φύσις, καὶ ὅσα ἡμετέρας ἀδύναται βαστάσαι δύναται · ἐγὼ τὸ πᾶν Θεὸς ἐξηγούμεθα · ἀλλ' ὅτι τὸ ἀκρίβες περὶ αὐτοῦ οὐκ οἶδαμεν, μετ' εὐγνωμοσύνης ὁμολογοῦμεν · ἐν τοῖς γὰρ περὶ Θεῶ μεγάλην γνώσιν τὸ τὴν ἀγνοσίαν ὁμολογεῖν.
S. *Cyrill.* Catech. 6.

Sermon sections of the divine Nature, have run
 XI. into the most inextricable Difficulties,
 and been embarras'd with a Number of
 Absurdities and Contradictions.

The *Epicureans* thought the Deity to be of the same Shape and Figure with a *Man*, and *Velleius* (who in *Tully's* most admirable Conference *de Natura Deorum*, maintained the Doctrines of that Sect,) argues for the Truth of it, both from the general Sentiments and Conceptions of Mankind, as well as the Excellency and Beauty of an human Body, which he thought the most proper Vehicle of the Deity; and lest this gross Assertion should too much expose him to the Cavils of his Adversary *Cotta*, he brings himself off with this subtle Distinction of his Master *Epicurus*; *non tamen ea species corpus est, sed quasi corpus, nec habet sanguinem, sed quasi sanguinem.*

'Tis probable that what gave Rise to this Restriction might be the Notion which the *Epicureans* had of *Body*, exclusively of *Spirit*; and, it is observable, that the Scripture, (though it be very positive in asserting the Reason of *spiritual* Beings as distinct from *Corporeal*), does still represent God the Father of *Spirits* with the *Eyes, Ears, Hands*, and other Parts of a *Man*: Not that these Representations are to be understood in a strict and literal Sense: For this would be gross Impiety, and must place our Christian Notions of the divine Nature upon the same Level with the Absurdities

dities of the *heathen Philosophers*. How-
 ever, they are made in Condescension and
 Compliance to our Infirmities, and are
 sufficient Proofs of the Weakness of our
 Understanding in framing Notions of an
 infinite and invisible Being, without the
 Intervention and Assistance of *Matter*.
 That *God is a Spirit*, is a Truth that is
 delivered to us in *Scripture*, and supported
 by the highest Authority of *Reason*; but
 then how to account for all the Proper-
 ties of a *Spirit* in general, or how to
 frame a perfect Idea of the *Spirituality* of
 the divine Nature, is what utterly baffles
 and confounds all the knowing and rea-
 soning Faculties of an human Soul. The
Athanasian Creed has given us better In-
 struction upon this sublime Argument,
 than all the corrupt Reasonings of Man-
 kind possibly could do, by teaching us,
 that *as the Father is Incomprehensible, so*
the Son is Incomprehensible, and the Holy
Ghost is Incomprehensible: And this Truth
 is founded upon what our Saviour him-
 self alludes to in St. Matthew's Gospel; *Matth. xi.*
As the Father was known of none but the
Son, so the Son is known of none but the
Father. As for us, the Children of Ig-
 norance, and the Off-spring of Corrup-
 tion, we are confined in our Searches, and
 puzzled in our Discoveries. *We have nei-*
ther learned Wisdom, nor have the Know-
ledge of the Holy: For touching the Al-
 mighty, we cannot find him out: Behold,
 he is great, and we know it not: He is ex-
 cellent in Power, unsearchable in his Judg-
 ments,

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Prov. xxx.

Job xxxvii.

23.

c. xxxvi.

26.

Sermon ments, *Incomprehensible* in his Nature, and
 XI. *Infinite* in his Duration.



And this brings me to the next Thing proposed to your Consideration, *viz.*

Secondly, The Deficiency of our Knowledge, in Reference to some of the most remarkable *Attributes* of God. I shall, at present content my self with the mentioning of *Three* only, *Omnipresence*, *Eternity*, and *Omniscience*: For what relates to the Spirituality of God's Nature has been touch'd upon under our former Particular, and what may be farther added concerning his *Power*, his *Mercy*, and his *Wisdom*, falls more naturally under the Consideration of his Works of *Creation* and *Providence*.

First, Then for *Omnipresence*, "which
 " we are taught by the *Schools* to define,
 " the real Extension of the divine Ef-
 " fence, through every individual Part
 " of the Universe, so as to fill All, and
 " to be included by None: That is, not
 to be *circumscrib'd* by any Place, or mea-
 sured by any Particle of Space or Mat-
 ter, as other Bodies or Spirits are; but
 to pervade the Whole, and be present
 every where at one and the same Time.

This Account of God's *Omnipresence* is the more intricate and shocking to human Nature, because it is so distant from those Methods by which we obtain Knowledge in other Cases. The greatest Part of our Information comes from our Senses, and the Reports which are made to the Understanding do generally result

result from corporeal Beings. When we argue about *Body* or *Space*, we have no Notion how one *Solid* should penetrate another, how one Individual should exist in different Places at the same Time, or, indeed, in any single Place without *Circumscription* or *Commensuration*. But the Case is vastly different, when we argue from these *sensible* and *material* Things to an *Invisible*, *Immense*, and *Infinite* Being. For though Bodies must be incircumscribed or circumscribed by other Bodies, yet who can inclose that boundless Being, whom *the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens* 2 Chr. vi. 8. cannot contain? The Clouds are his Chariot, and Earth is his Footstool: *Hell* Job xxxvi. *it self is naked before him, and Destruction* 6. *hath no Covering: his Way is in the Sea,* Ps lxxvii. *his Path in the great Waters, and his Foot-* 19. *steps are not known.*

O God! How great are thy Works! How deep are thy Thoughts, and how infinitely extensive thy Presence! The Invisibility of thy Nature is no Argument against thy *Omnipresence*, nor our shallow Comprehension any Standard of thy divine Essence! When we endeavour to survey Infinity, and would follow the Deity thro' *Earth* and *Sea*, through *Heaven* and *Hell* at the same Moment of Time; how is our pretended Wisdom non-plus'd, and all the Faculties of Reason at a Stand? We might struggle for ever without conquering the least Part of the Difficulty, if *Revelation* were not so kind to interpose, and *Faith* to lend her generous Assistance.

Sermon *sistence.* But, after all our super-natural

XI. Aids and Improvements, we must remember that we are but Men, and are clouded with Ignorance in this *Tabernacle* of Flesh and Blood. *The more we search, the more we shall marvel,* and what we cannot fathom, we must affectionately admire.—

Wis. ix. 26.

But,

Secondly, I proceed to shew the *Unsearchableness* of God from the Consideration of his *Eternity*.

We are apt to frame our Notion of *Eternity* from our Conceptions of Time, and when we have an Idea of any Part of Duration (whether it be of a *Minute* or an *Hour*, a *Day* or a *Year*) we are taught by the * greatest Masters of Reason to repeat this Idea in our Minds with all the endless Addition of Number, to come by the Idea of infinite Duration or *Eternity*.

But what are these *Lengthnings* and *Computations* of Time; what are our *Addition* and *Succession*, our *Prius* and *Posteriorius*, when they come to be applied to that *high and lofty One which inhabiteth Eternity*? What signify the Measure of *Days* and *Nights*, the *Revolutions* of Heavenly Bodies, or the *rising and setting of the Sun*, to give us an Idea of that great Being, who, instead of measuring the Length of his Duration by these Periods, *was God from everlasting to everlasting, and World without End, even before the Moun-*

Jer. lvii. 15.

Pf. xc. 2.

* See Locke's *Hum. Underst.* Bo. 2. ch. 14

things were brought forth, or ever the Heavens and the Earth were made.

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If we may be so bold to define what in this State of Imperfection we can never expect to * comprehend, we must say, "That the *Eternity* of God is one single Act of Duration, which measures all Periods and Portions of Time, without any of the distinguishing Parts of Succession:" And how our Conceptions are puzzled, and our Reason astonish'd at the bare Offer of such an Idea, may be easily gather'd, from the Necessity the Understanding is put under, of adding, dividing, and distinguishing, in an Affair which totally excludes all Manner of Addition, Division, and Succession.

The Expressions of the Psalmist (which, upon this Topic, are so lofty and rapturous,) may contribute something towards the strengthening of our Faith, tho' (I fear) but little towards the perfecting of our Ideas. *Thy Throne is established of old, and thou art from everlasting: Thou shalt endure for ever, and thy Remembrance thro' all Generations. The Earth shall wax old like a Garment, and the Heavens shall be changed as a Vesture; but thou (who hast stretched out their Lengths, and in the Beginning laid their Foundations) shalt always remain the same, and thy Years shall never fail.*

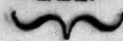
Thirdly, The last Attribute I am to consider God unsearchable in, is, his Om-

* South, Vol. I. Sermon. 1. p. 23.

niscience :

Sermon

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niscience: And if we would proceed upon this Attribute as we did upon the former, and, from our scanty Notions of Things, take our Measures of the divine Knowledge, we shall find the Disparity to be infinite, and our Faculties as much confounded as at the *Omnipresence* and *Eternity* of God.

Whereas *we see but in Part, and know in Part*, and this *partial Knowledge* is let in thro' corporeal Organs, and this *little Sight* is but, as it were, *thro' a Glass darkly*: Whereas we couple Causes and Effects together, to frame a Judgment of natural Bodies and the Reasons of human Actions, and by Principles and Postulatums, by Inferences and Deductions, arrive at some inferior Degree of Science; God, by one single Act of *Intuition*, penetrates and runs over all Objects, and with one clear View sees thro' the Windings of Time and the Lengths of Eternity, and contemplates what is *past* and *gone* as well as what is *present* and *future*; what is *contingent*, and *accidental*, as well as what is *free* and *necessary*: He looketh to the *Ends of the Earth*, and seeth under the *whole Heaven*; understandeth our *Thoughts afar off*, and knoweth our *Conceptions*, before the very *Mind* which conceiveth them. *Wisdom and Might are his*; Knowledge and Understanding are the Prerogative of his Nature. He revealeth the *deep and secret Things*; he knoweth what is *Darkness*, and the *Light dwelleth with him*.—But

Job xxviii.
26.

Pf cxxxix.
2.

Dan. ii. 20.

1. 22.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The next Thing I am to do, is to prove the *Unsearchableness* of God in Reference to the *Works of Creation*. Sermon XI.

There is nothing which has more perplex'd the wise Men of Antiquity, and baffled Philosophers to an higher Degree, than the Origin and Structure of this visible World: The Light of Reason suggested to them all, that whatever *was* must have a *Cause*, and that *something* could never be the Effect of *nothing*: And from hence they run into many fanciful Conjectures and wild Suppositions, and the most learned amongst them asserted *Matter* co-existent with the Deity, and only the Form and Disposition of Things to be owing to the divine Architect.

Now the Fault of all this, was, the Want of distinguishing between what was *impossible* and what was *inconceivable*, and making their own Abilities the Standard of Omnipotency. Had they had Recourse to an Almighty and Eternal Being, the Production of *something out of nothing* had been an easy Consequence from such a Concession, tho' the Manner of explaining it had not always lain level to their limited Capacities. For as the Inconceivableness of a Thing is no Argument for the Disbelief of it, so the pretending to explain every Difficulty about those Beings, whose Existence we have ocular Demonstration for, is a Token of the highest Arrogance and Presumption. For tho' God never acts but upon the wisest Motives, yet his Wisdom

doea

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does not always think fit to communicate the Reason of his acting to us; and what he does not think fit to *communicate*, can never be a proper Subject for our Determination.

The beautiful Structure of this World is what we should survey with Wonder; and the Serviceableness of the Creatures to Mankind is what we should recount with Gratitude: But when we would assign the Reasons, why the Deity should rest (as far as we know,) an Eternity of Ages, and only exert his creating Power for some thousand Years ago; when we would be privy to all the Transactions *under the Sun*, and account for the Nature, Product, and Formation of every Creature; into what insuperable Difficulties do we plunge our selves, and through what untrodden Mazes and Labyrinths is the perplex'd Mind forc'd to wander? God Almighty sufficiently satisfied *Job* of his Ignorance of created Beings, when he answered his impertinent Curiosity, in these lofty Expressions, out of the Whirl-

Job xxxviii wind: *Where wast thou when I laid the*
4, 5, 8, 10, *Foundations of the Earth? Declare, if thou*
11. *hast Understanding. Who hath laid the*
Measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who
hath stretched the Line upon it? Who hath
shut up the Sea with Doors, and broke up
for it the decreed Places, and said hitherto
shalt thou come, and no farther, and here
shall thy proud Waves be stayed.

Fourthly, Another Way of God's inconceivable Acting, is by *Miracles*. This
Method

Method being above the Course of natural Causes, must carry Surprize and Astonishment in the very Name of it. All the Way we have to come to physical Knowledge, is by considering the Virtues and Properties of Nature, and by making our Experiments and Observations upon the Tendencies and Productions of Things. But how uncertain and ineffectual a Course must this be? How vain and fallacious a Rule to judge by, when the Operations of Nature may be restrain'd, and the Effects and Products stifled, by the over-ruling Power of a superior Agent? 'Tis the known Property of *Fire to burn*, and of the *Sun to enlighten* this lower World; and how amazing must it be to see the *Violence* of the one *quench'd*, and the *Lustre* of the other eclips'd without any natural Cause? How amazing to behold some struck with Blindness *at Noon-Day*, and others walking thro' the *midst of the Flame* without singeing an Hair of their Head, or scorching a Thread of their Garment. All these Things have, and may be done; for the Power is still in God, tho' the Operation be contrary to the settled Course of Nature: For God doth great Things past finding out, and Wonders without Number. He removeth the Mountains, and overturneth them in his Anger. He shaketh the Earth out of her Place, and the Pillars thereof tremble. He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the Stars.

Job ix. 5,
6, 7.

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Prov. XXX.
3, 4

We ignorant Mortals cannot account for these præternatural Operations, but must resolve all into the boundless Power of an Almighty God. Whilst we dwell in these Houses of Clay, our Discoveries are as low and humble as the Dust, and the secret Hand which precipitates or suspends Nature, is altogether as incomprehensible, as it is invisible to us. For who of us hath ascended up into Heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the Wind in his Fists? Who hath bound up the Waters in a Garment? What is his Name, or what is his Son's Name, if thou canst tell?

Fifthly, The last Thing I am to prove the Unsearchableness of God from, is, the Course of his Providence.

That God Almighty governs as well as made this World, is a Truth obvious to Reason, and confirmed by Experience; and the Denial thereof will involve Men in a great many Absurdities and Contradictions. But notwithstanding our Certainty of the Government of Providence, and the Guidance and Inspection of a superior Power, yet 'tis Presumption to assign the Grounds upon which infinite Wisdom acts, and to resolve the Difficulties which result from all Events. We know so little of the Causes of natural Things, and the Principles and Motives of Action, that it would be Vanity in us to determine any Thing about what is supernatural and infinite. Perfect Wisdom must govern the World righteously, and

and administer all Things in due Order and Method. But blind Mortals must

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not expect to be admitted into the Cabinet of the Almighty, to be privy to the divine Counsels, and see thro' the surprising Events and mysterious Reasons of Providence.

O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! Rom. xi. 33, 34.

How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out! Who hath Job xxxviii. 33.

known the Ordinances of Heaven? Who can set the Dominion thereof in the Earth? Who hath known the Mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counsellor?

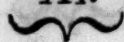
It is a great Happiness that in this imperfect State, “ * We know enough
“ both of the Works of Nature and the
“ Works of Providence, to serve all the
“ wise Ends and Purposes of Living ;
“ (which is all that is useful for us to
“ know, and all that God intended we
“ we should know :) ” But the Reasons
and Causes of Things, the Designs and
Purposes of the Almighty, the Rise and
Fall of Kingdoms, the Promotion and
Banishment of Princes, the Turns and
Revolutions of Nature, do all of them
entirely belong to that supreme Being,
who had Power at first to make, and has
still Wisdom to govern this unstable
World.—

Having thus, my Brethren ! in two
Discourses, run thro' the doctrinal Part
of my Text, and shew'd you, at large,

* Dr. Sherlock of divine Provid. Edit. 4to. p. 94.

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how we cannot by all our Inquiries and Penetration, *find out the Almighty to Perfection*; I think it now proper to draw to a Conclusion, and to make such Improvement of what has been said, as may be serviceable to every Auditor: And this is what I cannot more effectually do than in the

FOURTH and last Place, by dissuading you from a vain Affectation of *forbidden Knowledge*, and a Curiosity and Inquisitiveness into such *high Matters* as no ways concern you, and withal, by engaging you to apply your selves to those Truths which are plain and obvious to your Reason, and into the Nature and Design of *which*, God has been so far pleased to admit you in this State of Ignorance and Imperfection, as may procure you Ease in this World, and intitle you to Salvation in another.

First, For the Mortification of our Desires after *forbidden Knowledge*, and the silencing our Curiosity and Inquisitiveness into such *high Matters* as no ways concern us; we are to consider that Mankind was so far from being designed to know *every Thing*, that he knows but very little of *any Thing*. There are *some Things which the Angels desire to look into*, but being finite and created Beings, they are not admitted to that Privilege: And how comes it to pass, that mortal *Dust and Ashes* should pretend to a Degree of Knowledge, which *Cherubin and Seraphin* cannot

cannot possibly arrive unto? Those Things which are out of the *Sphere* of Angels, can never be adapted to Capacities of *Men*; and notwithstanding our boasting Confidence and arrogant Assurances, we do but expose our Ignorance and betray our Folly, in aiming to be *wiser* than we were designed to be. It is not the Sharpness of Parts, or Pregnancy of Wit; the Advantage of Improvement or the Constancy of Study, which will be able to master the abstruse and mysterious Parts of Knowledge. But after all our curious Enquiries and positive Assertions, after all our subtle Disputes and peremptory Determinations, we shall have too frequent Occasions to retract our Verdict, and blame our Judgments; too many Opportunities to see our Errors, and accuse our selves of Rashness and Precipitancy.

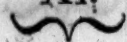
— But,

Secondly, There is one more particular Pretence to Knowledge, which by the Apostle's Advice we are charg'd to avoid, and that is *vain Philosophy, or Oppositions of Science falsely so called*. For this subtle Artifice borrowing the Shape of Reason, and appearing under the Disguise of Argument, and being set off with the Graces of human Oratory, did mightily annoy the Christian Faith in its Infancy, and blend some of its most distinguishing Doctrines with the Dregs and Pollutions of *Heathenism*. Hence sprung the damnable Tenets of the *Gnostics*, and all the senseless Jargon of the *Valentinian Heresy*.

Coloss. ii. 8.
1 Tim. vi.
20.

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Hence some of the most learned Fathers being converted from the Schools of the *Philosophers*, retained still a Tincture of their several Sects, and almost moulded Christianity into *Platonism*. Hence the most judicious Writers against the *Heathens* (such as were *Tertullian*, *Arnobius*, and *Minutius Felix*,) make the most tragical Exclamations against Philosophy. The common Accusation was, * *Hereses à Philosophia subornantur. Philosophi Hæreticorum Patriarchæ. Quid Athenis & Hierosolymis? Quid Academiæ & Ecclesiæ? Quid Hæreticis & Christianis?*

Now since these Philosophic Pretences have been revived, and the old heretical Game play'd over again in our Days: Since Revelation has been struck at by Arguments from Reason, and the *Mosaic* History of the Creation and Deluge, have been controverted and ridicul'd by our modern *Virtuosoes*: Since lastly the Writers of our atheistical Systems, and the Inventors of new *Hypotheses*, have taken Pains to recommend their destructive Performances with the Advantages of Language, and the enticing Words of *Men's Wisdom*; we can never more effectually obviate the Infection, and strengthen the Minds of well-meaning Persons, than by inculcating the Apostle's Precepts upon this Subject.

1 Tim. vi.
20, 5.

Avoid profane and vain Babblings, and doating about Questions and Strifes of Words,

* *Tertul. Præscript. et Lib. contra Hermog.*

whereof

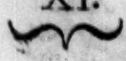
whereof cometh perverse Disputing of Men Sermon
of corrupt Minds, and destitute of the Truth. XI.
Beware, lest any one spoil you with Philoso-
phy and vain Deceit, after the Rudiments Coloss. ii.
of the World, and not after Christ. Be not 8. 4.
carried away with divers and strange Do- He. xiii. 9.
ctrines; nor be like Children tossed to and fro Eph. iv. 14.
by the slight and cunning Craftiness of
quibbling Sophists, whereby they lie in
Wait to deceive.

Thirdly, Let us apply our selves to
those Truths which are obvious to our
Reason, and which we have the Light
of Revelation to discover.

Things absolutely necessary to Salvation
are plainly delivered in Scripture, and our
Faith, by the Wisdom of the Church,
is collected into Summaries and Creeds,
and every Article is back'd with the most
convincing Texts of holy Writ. The
practical and moral Parts of our Duty
have the Light of Nature to confirm Re-
velation, and are so plain and obvious,
that he who runneth may read, and under-
stand. Do this and live, or do that and die,
is the general Direction both of the Law
and the Prophets; and the most ordinary
Capacity (unless devoid of common
Sense) cannot be ignorant of the Meaning
and Obligation of such plain Words.

It is farther observable, that there is
no Duty of Christianity but what is in-
culcated several Times by the divine Le-
gislator, and perhaps none of the least
Reasons of this repeated Inculcation may
be, that Men might have no Plea for
their

Sermon their Ignorance, and by seeing their Du-

XI.  ty almost in every Page of the *Bible* might be left without Excuse if they did not practice it. For when the Light of Nature informs Men of some Truths, and Revelation confirms them in their innate Notions of the same, when the Words of a Law are intelligible and obvious, and *Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept*, notify the Will of the Law-giver; it is a moral Impossibility for Men to mistake in any Point of Importance, unless they wilfully shut their own Eyes, or maliciously blind their Understandings.

Fourthly, This Sort of Knowledge which relates to common Matters of Faith, and plain practical Morality, is most easy and advantageous to us. For *This* neither puffs up, or presses down; neither swells us into Arrogance, nor sinks us into Despair; but keeps the Soul in a quiet and delightful Posture, and confines the Christian to the Sphere of his own Profession. 'Tis the attempting of abstruse and intricate Matters which affects the Brain, and brings Sullenness on the Visage, and Melancholy on the Heart of the Student. 'Tis your Dealers in *Visions*, and your Explainers of the *Revelations*, who commence Preachers and Prophets, and turn Enthusiasts and Mad-men. 'Tis your *Predestinarians* and *Fatalists* who are sour and rugged, and your Pretenders to *Election* and *Grace*, who are spiritually proud and assuming:
But

But the plain Christian, who goes on in Sermon
the beaten Road of practising and be- XI.
lieving, keeps his Head cool and his
Faith untainted, secures his Peace in
this World, and extends his Hopes to
another.

What should hinder us then from
embracing those Truths, which *offer them-*
selves willingly to our unprejudiced Rea-
son? What strange Infatuation has pos-
sessed the Minds of Men, that they
should desire to pry into those Things
which God has, at present, *hidden from*
their Eyes, and yet continue negligent of
other Points which they are under indis-
pensable Obligations to know and pra-
ctice? Our Happiness does not consist in
explaining Mysteries, but in doing of our
Duty, not in disputing nicely about the
Trinity, and adjusting the Differences be-
tween *Prescience* and *Predestination*; but
in worshipping the Trinity in Unity, in be-
lieving the divine Omniscience, and in
submitting quietly to the *Decrees* of
God.

Fifthly and lastly, This practical Know-
ledge does not only secure our *Ease in this*
World, but intitles us to *Salvation* in
another.

The Word *Salvation* contains under it
an Affluence and Fruition of all manner
of Blessings, and amongst the Rest, the
Entertainments of the *Soul* are placed in
the highest and most considerable Rank.
Now the proper Delight of the Soul is
Knowledge, and tho' she can't be blest'd
with

Sermon with a perfect Enjoyment of it *here*, yet Virtue will secure to her the Completion of it *hereafter*. What is necessary for us to know in this World, is already revealed to us, and what is farther needful to compleat our Happiness, shall be communicated in another State. For the Time is coming, when our Capacities shall be enlarged, our Eyes enlightened, and our Judgments reformed. Then Truth shall triumph, and Error shall vanish: Faith shall be swallowed up in Vision, and Grace shall give a new Turn to the Soul. Then the most illiterate Clown shall stand upon the Level with the most learned Philosopher, and Virtue shall enrich all her Sons with the choicest Gifts of heavenly Knowledge.

In thy Light, O God, we speedily expect to see Light, and when we awake up in thy Likeness to be satisfied with it: In thy Kingdom we wait for the Fulness of Joy, and in thy Presence for the Perfection of Knowledge. By the Merits of thy Son we hope to have all the Defects of our Will pardon'd, and by the Assistance of thy blessed Spirit all the Errors of our Judgment rectified. Amen.

Now to God the Father, &c.

The

*The small Number of true
Christians.*

A

S E R M O N

Preached in the

Cathedral-Church of WELLS.

REV. iii. 4.

Thou hast a few Names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their Garments; and they shall walk with me in White: For they are worthy.

THOUGH the Revelation of St. *John* has always bore the Character of an abstruse and enigmatical Book, and those that have been most conversant in the Study of it, have been reckon'd *Enthusiasts* or *Madmen*; yet it must be confess'd, that some Part of it is perspicuous and intelligible, and very wholesome Instructions may be gather'd

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Sermon ther'd from the Facts recorded in it, to
 XII. prevent the Ruin of a National Church.

To persuade Men, therefore, from a total Reading of this Book, is a Reflection upon the Person that penn'd, as well as the Spirit that indited it; and a manifest Perversion of the Ends for which
 Rev. i. 1/3. it was published. *For it is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, signified by his Angel to his Servant John: And blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the Words of this Prophecy, and keep those Things which are written therein.*

Some practical Knowledge, you see, is to be collected from these *Apocalyptical* Writings; and if there was nothing else remarkable in them, but the Fate of those eminent Churches which St. *John* had planted, and his several Denunciations against their luke-warm and apostatizing Members; the Perusal of them would be both a *curious* and *profitable* Amusement.

Who can read the Threatnings against
 Rev. ii. 4. *Ephesus* and *Smyrna*, and not be warm'd
 30. into a zealous Resentment for the Honour of God, and confirm'd in Patience and Constancy under all the Persecutions and Suffering of this transitory Life?

q. ii. 14, 20. The Charge against *Pergamos* and *Thyatira* may imprint on our Minds an Abhorrence of Schism, and shew us the Danger of complying with idolatrous Worshipers, and giving the least Indulgence to carnal Impurity.

The

The Church of *Philadelphia* is a lovely Pattern of Perseverance and Integrity: But her *Sister Laodicea* is altogether as odious for her *Luke-warmness* and Indifference in Religion.

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Rev. iii. 7,
8, 9, 15, 16.

Sardis has something very detestable, and something very beautiful in her Character: For, amongst the Stupidity and Deadness of her Members, she still gloried in some vigorous and active Spirits, in some select Heroes and Champions of the Faith, whose *Mitres* had never stooped to Schism, and whose *Lawn* had never been dipt in Blood.

Thou hast a few Names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their Garments; and they shall walk with me in White: For they are worthy.

In the Words there are these four Things to be considered.

FIRST, The small Number of orthodox and sincere Christians in the Church of *Sardis*; *thou hast a few Names, even in Sardis.*

SECONDLY, The Character which is given them for their Zeal and Integrity; *They have not defiled their Garments.*

THIRDLY, The Reward which is promis'd them by God for their Services; *They shall walk with me in White.*

FOURTHLY,

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FOURTHLY, A Reason specified for conferring this Reward; *For they are worthy.*

FIRST, The first Assertion, which the Text presents us with, is, *That there are but a few undefiled Names, even in Sardis:* And from hence I must beg Leave to discourse of *Two Things.*

First, The Smallness of the Number of truly zealous and orthodox Christians.

Secondly, The usual Method of divine Providence, in placing some Persons of distinguish'd Piety in the midst of a corrupted Church.

First, I am to consider the small Number of truly zealous and orthodox Christians; *Thou hast a few Names, even in Sardis.*

Not, but that there might be *Many* who had taken the Name, and professed the Doctrine of Christ Jesus; but there were *Few* who copied after the Example of a suffering Saviour, and liv'd up to the Strictness and Purity of the Gospel.

This was a Complaint, not only against *Sardis*, but also against other Churches: It was a Case frequently deplored, but seldom reform'd: A Truth, confirmed by Experience, as well as delivered by Revelation. The Corruption of Manners, the renouncing of the Faith, the

the Disregard of Communion, and the Sermon
ridiculing of the Church, do all of them **XII.**
bear Witness to those positive Assertions 
in the Scripture; *That many are called, but* Matt. xx:
few chosen: That wide is the Gate, and 16.
broad is the Way to Destruction, and many
there be which go in thereat: But that
strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way
which leadeth unto Life, and few there be
that find it.

The Names in Sardis were but few; and
succeeding Generations have had no great
Reason to boast of the Augmentation of
their Number, or glory in the eminent
Zeal of their Confessors. Virtue has sel-
dom dar'd to make her open Appear-
ance, or solicit for Converts amongst the
Rich and the Noble. She has spent her
Days in Weeping and Solitude, and
sought for Protection from *Dens and Ca-*
verns of the Earth. Her Retinue has
been small and indigent, and Martyrdom
has lopp'd off her courageous Prelates,
or Persecution frightened her straggling
Members.

The Actions of good Men are liable
to be conceal'd; or, if they should be
known, to be violently born down by the
Noise and Turbulence of Faction, or be
wrested and perverted by the Malice of
daring and audacious Sinners. Their
Practices glide along, like the silent
Stream, and afford but little Matter of
Speculation or Remark to those that pass
by: But the profane Swaggering of the
Multitude is like the Swelling and Ra-
ging.

Sermon
XII.  ging of the great Deep, which attracts the Eyes of Spectators with a surprizing Horror, and drowns all calmer Sounds by it ceaseless Din and Clamour.

To all this we may add, That Piety is very modest and reserv'd in its own Nature, and doth not love those flaunting and popular Airs which Vice generally affects to appear in. She never chuses to harangue it upon her own Excellency before a Concourse of People; nor courts the Stage or the Theatre for the gaining of Profelytes. She delights less in the *Proclamations* from the *House-top*, and the repeated *Hosannas* from the crowded Streets below, than in the Retirements of the Closet, and the Applauses of *him that seeketh in secret*.

But notwithstanding the Modesty of Virtue, the Impudence of Vice, the Retirement of good Men, and the slow Progress of Religion; it is still observable in the

Second Place, That the wise Providence of God usually raises some Persons of distinguished Piety, and places them amongst the corrupted Members of his Church.

As the Goodness of God has settled the true Religion amongst us, so his Veracity is engaged for the Continuance of it, and his Power is always visibly display'd for the Protection of his Servants. The *Preaching* of Noah was remarkable in the *Old World*, and the *Conversation* of Lot noted in a lascivious Sodom. *Abraham*

ham had the Character of commanding *Sermon*
his Children and his Household after him, *XII.*
 and the *Patriarchs* were a Mall to the
 Idolatry of the Neighbouring Nations. *Gen. xviii.*
 What a Curb were the *Prophets* to the
 rebellious *Israelites*? What Terrors did
 religious Princes strike into the *Worship-*
pers of Baal? And what a lovely Face
 of a Church did *Daniel* and his Associates
 maintain in the *Babylonish Captivity*?

Under the Christian Dispensation, we
 find yet greater Matter for Triumph
 and Exultation. For the Method of
 establishing our Religion, the Zeal of
 Profelytes, the Number of Martyrs, and
 the orthodox Confession of Churches,
 are so many several convincing Proofs of
 the Care of Providence, and the Fidelity
 of the Saints.

But yet it must still be confess'd, that
 there is a Mixture amongst Believers, a
Leaven which ferments in the Bowels of
 the Church, and discovers it self in some
 swelling and pernicious Errors. The
 very *First-Fruits* of the Gospel were
 nipt and wither'd, and *Wild Grapes* be-
 came the Product of the *Vineyard*. Some
 were not able to *bear the scorching Heat*
of the Sun, and wanted Strength to stand
 in the Day of Trial: Others had too
 great a Fondness for Flesh and Blood,
 and were too easily wrought upon by
 worldly Temptations and Seducements.

But notwithstanding this Cowardice,
 this Folly, this Baseness, and Avarice of
 particular Men; what we still contend

Q

for,

Sermon for, is, that the Corruption, in strict
 XII. Speech, was never so universal, that *all*
 were gone out of the Way and become abominable, and that there was none that did Good, no not one: The spiritual Disease was never so epidemical, that from the Sole of the Foot, unto the Crown of the Head, there was nothing but Wounds, and Bruises, and putrefying Sores. There has not been wanting a Moses to stand in the Gap, a Phinehas to stop the Plague, and a Samuel to intercede for a rebellious People. When the Altars were demolished, and the Prophets slain with the Sword, those who had not bowed their Knee to Baal, made their Appearance. Whenever Heresy has plun'd herself, and argued for an Establishment, she has met with those who have confronted her Blasphemies, and curb'd her Insolence. The *Valentinians* have been encountered by an *Ireneus*, the *Arians* by an *Athanasius*, the *Pelagians* by an *Augustine*, and all future Apostates by some eminent Prelate, or flaming Confessor.

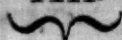
'Tis true these Champions may have been inferior in Number to the Enemy, and not so noisy and tumultuous as those who have defied the Armies of the living God: But, like Stars of the first Magnitude, they have appeared with a surprising Lustre, and always made some Impressions upon distant Bodies. A Success answerable to the Merits of our Cause, is what we do not pretend to lay Claim to; but Truth is always simple and uniform,

form, and the Principles of Religion are plain and defensible. A Zeal in some of our Managers, and a Strength of Argument in them all, is what our *own Ears have heard*, as well as *our Fathers have declared unto us*. The Promise of God for the Perpetuity of his Church, and his Interposal by some eminent Persons for the Preservation of it, makes us hope that our Case will never be so desperate, as *that* of the profligate *Jews*, when Complaint was entred against the whole Nation by the *Prophet Jeremy*, and Proclamation uttered in those surprizing Words, *Run ye to and fro through the Streets, and see now and know, and seek in the broad Places thereof, if ye can find a Man, if there be any that executeth Judgment, that seeketh the Truth; and I will pardon it.* Sermon XII.
Jer. v. 1.

We hope also that our Disobedience will never be so universal, nor our Undutifulness to our Mother so flagrant, *that there should be none to guide her among all the Sons that she hath brought forth; neither any to take her by the Hand of all the Sons that she hath brought up.* If li. 18. We have found in our Distress, that some Persons have always asserted the Doctrine, and maintained the Truth of Christianity, and that even Blood and Treasure have not been wanting for the Service of Religion. The *Scriptures*, in the Height of Atheism and Infidelity, can bring Vouchers for their Inspiration, and the venerable Trinity has its strenuous Advocates

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cates and Abettors. A Man is seldom so deformed, but some Features and Lineaments of Humanity remain: The Sun is rarely so obscured, but some Ray will break through the interposing Cloud, and fix a manifest Distinction between Day and Night.

Right Reason is not to be totally effac'd, nor Conviction smothered. Conscience will work upon some Tempers, and Grace perfects the Operation. A Joint Harmony and Concurrence of Spiritual Virtues will blow the Christian into an Hero, and heighten his Resolutions into Martyrdom.

God forbid that we should deify our own Party, or carry the Praises of mortal Men beyond their Deserts: God forbid that we should *go on in any confident Way of Boasting*, and glory in the Ostentation of our own Piety, or the wild Exploits of an extravagant Zeal. But still Justice is to be done to the Instruments of Providence, and the Advocates of Religion, and the *Luke-warmness* of *Some* is to be upbraided, and the Courage of *Others* is to be quick'ned by the shining Examples of some select *Prelates* and *Pa-*

Judg. v. 9. *trials.*

My Heart is toward the Governors of Israel, who offer themselves willingly among the People, and engage boldly in the Cause of God and his Church: And oh! that my Tongue were able to celebrate their Praises, and that the Prayers of the Faithful would continually intercede for the

the Preservation of their Persons, and the Augmentation of their Numbers.

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SECONDLY, I am to consider the Character which is given these *few Names* for their Zeal and Integrity; *they have not defiled their Garments.*

This Character is negative, and drawn up in Opposition to the Vices which the Members of the Church of *Sardis* were generally guilty of: And, if we would come to a just Notion of the Encomium in the Text, we must explain what is there figuratively and metaphorically delivered, by the plainer and more conspicuous Assertions of the Context.

In the three first Verses of this Chapter, we have the following Account of the Church of *Sardis*: *I know thy Works that thou hast a Name, that thou livest, and art dead; be watchful, and strengthen the Things which remain, that are ready to die: For I have not found thy Works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent.*

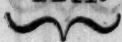
This general Accusation of the Majority of the Church of *Sardis*, as far as it tends to the Renown of the *few Names*, who have not defiled their Garments, may be reduced to the following Heads:

First, The Imperfection of their Works.

Secondly, The Pretensions of Life, when they are really dead.

Q 3

Thirdly,



The small Number

Thirdly, A Default in Vigilance and Watchfulness.

Fourthly, A Want of Perseverance and Constancy.

First, The first Accusation against the Generality of Christians in *Sardis*, was, the Imperfection of their *Works*: And what may be hence inferr'd to the Honour of those *Few* who have not struck in with the vicious Multitude, is, the Regularity of their Actions, and the Conformity of their Practice to the Injunctions of Christianity: The Sincerity of the Heart, and not the formal Profession of the Lips, was the Glory of their Lives.

We see Abundance of Pretensions to Purity amongst Christians, and find the vilest Actions conceal'd under the Mask of *Sanctity*. Hypocrisy has strangely infested the Church of God; and *Religion*, which in its own Nature is *pure and undefiled*, is made the *Cloke of Maliciousness*, and the Tool of Vice. How much then are they to be applauded, who live up to the Rules of their sacred Profession, and carry on no sinister Designs by holy Shams and pious Artifices? Whose Works are answerable to their Engagements, whose Love has consummated their Faith, and whose Knowledge has been sanctified by Charity?

Secondly, Another Fault in the Christians of *Sardis*, was their Pretensions to *Life*, when they were really *dead*: This
has

has a Relation to the Being and Existence of a Church, and all the visible Marks of Church-Communion, notwithstanding a Deficiency and Neglect of Practice. Sermon XII.

In Opposition to this, the true Believer is not so much solicitous about the *Name* as the *Thing*; and does not so much swell with the pompous Title of a *Church-man*, as rejoice in the solid Piety and undistinguish'd Virtues of the *Church*.

We know that it is the Custom of a great Many to give Encomiums of the *Church*, who have no extraordinary Opinion of her *Doctrine*, or her *Discipline*; and to talk much of her secure and flourishing Condition, when they are cramping her Jurisdiction, or reducing her Revenue. But if these Men had their Aim, and their destructive Schemes took Effect, the Welfare of the Church would be very precarious, and she would receive no more Support from some smooth Words and artful Promises, than he that is *naked and destitute of daily Food*, from those tantalizing Expressions, *Be thou warmed, Be thou filled.* Jam. ii. 15, 16.

Thirdly, The Generality of Christian Professors in *Sardis* were defective in *Watchfulness*; but those *Few* who were exempted in the Text, were eminent for the Exercise of that Virtue. They considered the Design of their Christian Warfare, and in every Station and Circumstance of Life, acquitted themselves

Sermon like *faithful Soldiers and Servants* of the
 XII. *Captain of their Salvation.* If any At-
 tempt came from *Without* or *Within*,
 they were still upon the Defensive; and
 neither the Wiles of *Satan*, nor the In-
 stigation of their own Lusts, could beat
 down the Guard, and betray them into
 the Captivity of Sin. Others might
slumber and sleep, and by a fatal Remiss-
 ness give Way to their own Destruction;
 but *they* were armed against a *Mid-night*
 Surprise, and ready upon an unusual
 Summons to meet the *Bridegroom*.

In short, neither a Neglect of their
 Duty, a Disregard of the Enemy, a Con-
 fidence in themselves, or a Failure of
 Courage, did enervate their Diligence, or
 expose them to Dangers.

Fourthly, The last Accusation which is
 laid against the Bulk of Professors, (from
 whence we are to draw the opposite Cha-
 racter of the *few* Orthodox Christians)
 is the Want of Perseverance and Con-
 stancy in Religion. This Charge is in-
 serted against most of the Churches, and
 arose from those trimming Doctrines
 which were introduced by some temporiz-
 ing Christians, and those unjustifiable Cour-
 ses that were taken to avoid Persecution.
 In Opposition to this general Practice, there
 were some Persons who dar'd renounce
 Flesh and Blood, and sacrifice their Lives
 in Defence of Religion; there were some
 Persons who dar'd to own their Saviour
 under the most disadvantageous Circum-
 stances, and to magnify their Christian
 Faith

Faith in the Mouths of *Lions*, or the midst of *Flames*. Such may have been well said not to have prostituted their Consciences by any servile Compliances, or artful Equivocations; not to have receded from their baptismal Vow through any unmanly Fears or avaritious Designs; not to have sacrificed the Privileges of the Church to the open Menaces of Tyrants, or the more subtle Artifices of *false Friends*.

As the Courage of these Persons was great, and their Example of signal Advantage to the *militant Church*; so we are not to doubt but in the

THIRD Place, their Service was acceptable to God, and a proportionable Reward was to crown their Labours: *For he that bath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven Stars, bath promised, that they* ^{Rev. iv. 1,} ⁴ *shall walk with him in White.*

These Words are also metaphorical, and conceived in the dark and obscure Style of the *Revelations*: The best Light to their Meaning is in the Verse following my Text, where the like Expression is explained by something of more familiar Use and noted Signification in other Parts of Scripture; *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white Raiment;* ^{v. 5.} *and I will not blot out his Name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his Name before my Father, and before his Angels.*

From these two Places laid together, we may safely infer, That those who are truly

Sermon
XII.

Luke xii.
8, 9.

truly sincere and magnanimous in the Profession of Christianity, shall be adorn'd in a royal and magnificent Manner in another State, and have the highest Marks of Honour bestowed upon them in the Presence of all the Heavenly Host. This is what was promis'd by our Saviour in the Infancy of the Church, and was designed to buoy up the Minds of the Faithful against the Sufferings and Persecutions of a malicious World. *Whoever (says he) shall confess me before Men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the Angels of God. But he that denieth me before Men, shall be denied before the Angels of God.* What a glorious Promise is here to Magnanimity and Zeal, and what a terrible Threatning to Cowardice and Apostacy! How shall the temporizing Sinner shake and tremble, when his Judge shall look him in the Face, and all the Heavenly Host be Spectators of his Villany? But with what Applause shall he be received, who has not truckled to the Mighty, nor flattered the Proud; who has not complimented away his Religion upon a Prospect of Gain, nor sneak'd from his Principles for Fear of Punishment; but has combated Herefy in every Shape, and been an Advocate for Truth in the most perilous Times.

Well done, Thou good and faithful Servant: Sit at my right Hand, thou magnanimous and triumphant Soul: Put on thy costly Robes, and deck thy self with Gold;

Gold; for the King of Glory has adopted thee into the Number of the First-born, and Saints and Angels are to be thy Companions in Paradise.

Sermon
XII.

FOURTHLY, I am to consider the Reason specified for conferring a Reward upon the *few Names in Sardis*: *They are worthy.*

To be *worthy* in a strict Sense, or to claim any Thing of God upon the Score of our personal Merit, is altogether inconsistent with the Sinfulness of our Nature; but to be *worthy* in a qualified Acceptation of the Word, and to be intitled to the Reward of our Sincerity thro' the Merits and Satisfaction of our Redeemer, is Privilege enough for *Dust and Ashes*. In this lower Meaning of *Worthiness*, the Saints in the Text are particularly characteriz'd, and distinguish'd from the vicious Multitude. They have behaved themselves as they ought, and from hence accrues their Title according to the Christian Tenure; and the Veracity of their God, and the Merits of their Saviour, will vest them in the Possession of it. You see how their great Master extols their Services, and speaks of them in Terms which almost equalize his own Sufferings: *They shall walk with me in White; for they are worthy*: They are fit Companions for the Blessed Jesus, because their Actions resemble *his*: The same Cause has signaliz'd their Courage, and the same Kind of

Sermon of Death has frequently terminated their
 XII. Life. — Well then may they be Sharers
 in the Reward, and Inheritors of the
 Bliss; as they were Partakers of the La-
 bours, and involved in the Sufferings of
 their Lord.

Now if you would arrive at the same
 Degree of Perfection here, and the same
 State of Happiness hereafter, with those
few Names which are so much magnified
 in the *Church of Sardis*; I must beg
 Leave to press upon your Minds these
 three Things, which shall serve as so ma-
 ny Inferences to close up the fore-going
 Discourse,

First, The maintaining of good Prin-
 ciples.

Secondly, The not being discourag'd at
 the Smallness of your Number.

Thirdly, The avoiding the Influence
 and Solicitation of the Multitude.

First, The first Thing to be inferr'd
 from the fore-going Discourse, is the Ne-
 cessity we are under of maintaining good
 Principles.

Some Persons have of late Years run
 great Lengths in Praise of moral Men,
 and bestowed very gaudy Characters up-
 on the *Arians* and *Socinians* of our Age,
 upon the Account of their practical Vir-
 tues: But such Persons would do well to
 consider, that there are other Graces and
 Qualifications beside Temperance, So-
 briety, Justice, Chastity, and the like, to
 consti-

constitute a good Man : And though the Ring-leaders of Heresy should be exemplary for some of these Virtues ; yet their spiritual Pride, their dictating to Authority, and their new-modelling of Scripture, are such flagrant Crimes as should provoke our *Satyr* rather than our *Panegyrick*.

Sermon
XII.

If the doing of some Things well were sufficient for Justification, and the Observance of two or three Points were keeping the whole Law, the Apostle had no Reason to be so severe upon *Sardis* and her Sister Churches : For they were all of them eminent for many Virtues ; but a Looseness of Principles, and a trimming Spirit was crept into their Members, and the God of Truth and Constancy could not bear this Winding and Shuffling in Religion.

The Memorial of these Churches is now ceas'd, and their Candlesticks are removed out of their Places ; and if we would avoid their Fate, we must take Care not to relinquish our Principles by their Example. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent : Hold fast the Profession of your Faith without wavering, and faulter not in any Article of it upon Pain of Damnation. Keep what thou hast, that no Man take away thy Crown ; and be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, that thy Labour may not be in vain in the Lord :

Rev. ii. 5.

c. iii. 3.

Hebr. x. 23.

Rom. iii. 11.

1 Cor. xv

58.

Secondly,

Sermon

XII.

Luke xii.
32.

Secondly, The next Inference is the Encouragement, which the small Number of the Faithful may receive from the Character here given of the *few Names in Sardis*: For as they were extoll'd and rewarded, so shall all those that tread in their Steps, and copy out their Virtues. *Fear not, little Flock*; for ye are the elect and beloved of the Lord, *and it is your Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom*. The Smallness of your Number shall not be any Impediment to your Promotion, nor the Disgrace of this World incapacitate you for the Crowns and Sceptres of another. It is Truth, and not Popularity, which you are to aim at; Faith, and not Pretension, which you are to be fav'd by: And if *your Conversation has been as becometh the Gospel of Christ*, (however you have been brow-beat and discourag'd upon Earth) *your Father which seeth in Secret shall reward you openly*, and by the Wariness and Circumspection of your walking, condemn those who rush on in the *broad Way* and beaten Road to Destruction.

Thirdly and lastly, From the general Corruption of the Church of *Sardis*, we may gather the Necessity of avoiding the Influence and Contagion of the Multitude.

It is not Numbers can defend, or great Names patronize you: For they cannot deliver their own Souls, much less can they make an Agreement for Others. *Mighty Men shall mightily be tormented*, their Stations

tions shall add to their Guilt, and the Sermon Abuse of their Talents aggravate their Damnation. XII.

We are not to enquire, *Whether any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees have believed on him,* nor are we to have *Mens Persons in Admiration* to the influencing of our Faith: Much less are we to make that uncharitable Reflection, *This People who knoweth not the Law, are cursed.* We are not to enquire what such a *Prelate* hath wrote, or such a *Nobleman* practiced; but the Rule is before us, and the *Word within our Lips.* Reason and Education have made us Judges of common Sense and Truth, and we need not be new-disciplin'd in our Faith, and have the *Old Gospel* gloss'd upon and commented away for the Support of Party and Faction.

Stand ye therefore in the Ways, and see and ask for the old Paths; where is the good Way, and walk therein. *Accept no Person against your Soul, and let not the Reverence of any Man cause you to fall.* *Whatsoever Things are Primitive and Outhodox, Whatsoever Things are true, Whatsoever Things are honest, Whatsoever Things are just, Whatsoever Things are pure, Whatsoever Things are lovely, Whatsoever Things are of good Report; if there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise, think on these Things; and*

Sermon ⁷ the Patron of Obedience shall reward
XII. your Thoughts, and the God of Peace
shall be with you for evermore. Amen.

Now to God the Father, God the
Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be
rendered and ascribed all Power,
Majesty, Glory, and Adoration,
both now and for ever. Amen.

Honesty

*Honesty prosecuted ; or, Fidelity
odious to corrupt Courtiers.*

IN TWO

SERMONS

Preached at

B A T H.

D A N. vi. 5.

*Then said these Men, We shall not find
any Occasion against this Daniel, ex-
cept we find it against him concerning
the Law of his God.*

AMONGST all the Captives which were carried from Jerusalem to Babylon, Daniel was one of the most eminent for Piety and Wisdom, and the most serviceable to that conquering State which it was his misfortune to be subject to. At his first Arrival in a foreign Land, he, in Conjunction with his three Friends (*Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego*) were singled out as Persons well-favour'd, and skilful in all Wisdom, and cunning in Knowledge, and understanding Science,

Sermon
XIII.

Dan. i. 19.

v. 4.

Sermon *Science, and such as had Ability in them to*
 XIII. *stand in the King's Palace:* And the
 ~~~~~ Royal Orders were accordingly issued  
 out for their Instruction, *by the Master of*  
*the Eunuchs, in the Tongue and Language of*  
*the Chaldeans, to qualify and capaci-*  
*tate them for the future Service of the*  
*Kingdom.*

c. v. 12.

c. i. 20.

In a short Time, *the excellent Spirit*  
*which was in Daniel, did discover it self*  
*in seeing of Visions, and interpreting Dreams;*  
*in shewing of hard Sentences, and dissolving*  
*of Doubts; insomuch, that in all Matters*  
*of Wisdom and Understanding that the*  
*King enquired of him, he found him ten*  
*times better than all the Magicians and*  
*Astrologers that were in all his Realm.*  
 These extraordinary Gifts and Qualifica-  
 tions did no sooner make way for his  
 own Promotion, but they drew the Envy  
 and Resentment of the Courtiers upon  
 his Head. For when he out-stripp'd the  
*Chaldeans* in Wisdom, and the *Princes of*  
*Babylon* in Preferment, it was natural for  
 these disgusted Persons to think of  
 Reprisals, and to consign their grand E-  
 nemy to the *Den of Lions*, and his three  
 Friends and Abettors to the *fiery Furnace*.  
 However, the good Providence of God  
 did carry them victorious and triumphant  
 through all these Barbarities, and even  
*stopp'd the Mouths of Lions, and quench'd*  
*the Violence of Fire, for their Deliverance*  
 and Preservation. Every Stratagem turn-  
 ed upon the Head of the Contrivers; eve-  
 ry Accusation display'd the Malice of  
 their



their Accusers, and every Prosecution Sermon ended in a fresh Promotion of the Innocent. XIII.

Thus *Daniel* continued in Favour at Court in the Reigns of *Nebuchadnezzar*, and his Son *Belsazzar*; and when the Empire was transferr'd to the *Medes*, and *Darius* was on the Throne, we find *Daniel* appointed the Chief of the three Prefidents, who were to receive the annual Accounts of inferior Princes, and to audit the Expences of the Kingdom. c. vi. 1, 2.

In fine, the King was so well pleas'd with his Management, that he thought to set him over the whole Realm, and to make him the sole and absolute Minister of State. v. 3.

This so highly incensed his Brother - Courtiers, that they sought in the first Place to find Occasion against him concerning the Kingdom, and to ground their Impeachments upon Misdemeanors and Male-Administration. But when his Accounts were too clear to be inspected, and his Fidelity too flaming to be opposed, Policy instructed them to turn their Heads another way, and to enact such a general Law about Religion as would certainly take hold of *Daniel's* particular Case.

Then said these Men, we shall not find any Occasion against this *Daniel*, except we find it against him concerning the Law of his God.

Sermon

XIII. From these Words I shall raise *six* Observations for the Subject of my ensuing Discourses.

FIRST, That there is a Diffidence or Hesitancy of Vice in her Attempts upon Virtue.

SECONDLY, That she proceeds with Caution and Policy for the more effectual Accomplishment of her Designs.

THIRDLY, That there is a Worth in a virtuous Person which is sufficiently acknowledg'd, even by his Enemies.

FOURTHLY, That the Fidelity of a Minister renders him odious to his corrupt Brethren.

FIFTHLY, That Religion is the Handle made use of for his Removal.

SIXTHLY, That notwithstanding, this Plotting and Contrivance of wicked Men, yet still the more religious Men are, the greater Friends they will prove to Government.

FIRST, I observe from the Text the Diffidence and Hesitancy of Vice in her early Attempts upon Virtue: *We shall*

*shall not find any Occasion against this* Sermon  
Daniel. XIII.

His Accusers seem embarrass'd and perplex'd, non-plus'd and puzzled in the very Formation of their Scheme: They look with a faint Heart and a pallid Countenance on both Sides of the Question, and turn the Arguments over and over in their Thoughts, before they venture upon an Experiment: But the Difficulty thickens upon their Hands, new Obstacles arise in their Minds, and the Fear of a Miscarriage retards their Proceedings.

Whether Conscience may not be a little quick and pungent, and cool the Fury of the first Onset, is very natural for us to consider. For Vice encounters with Obstacles as well as Virtue, and proceeds leisurely at first by certain Steps and Gradations. Like heavy Bodies, she sets out slowly in the Beginning, but Strength is added in the Course of the Journey, and the Motion is accelerated by the Nearness of the Centre.

*Nemo repente fuit turpissimus.*

Juv. Sat. 2.

There must be Time and Application, Exercise and Experience, to form a *Villain* as well as a *Saint*. Nature has left the strictest Guard upon Virtue, and barricadoed and fenced up the Way against all sudden Attacks. Reason and Interest are Enemies to Vice, and the *Angel of the Lord stands with his Sword drawn in his Hand*, to retard her Progress and Defeat her Designs.



Sermon  
XIII.

The great Parent of Sin does not open the black Scene all at once, for fear of intimidating and confounding his Votaries. He draws on his raw Disciples by Degrees, trains and disciplines their tender Limbs in the School of Villany, and flushes them with little Prizes, before he plays them upon the most daring Crimes.

And this brings me to the next Observation from the Text, viz.

**SECONDLY,** The Policy of Vice in the Prosecution of her dangerous Designs.

Dan. vi. 7.

In the Instance before us, there is Consultation and Caballing, Contrivance and Management *amongst the Presidents of the Kingdom, the Governors and the Princes, the Counsellors and the Captains:* And the Result of all is, We must not proceed with Rashness and Precipitancy, and foolishly accuse a Man for what all sober Persons will acquit him. No; the Scene must be wisely laid, and Craft must cover our Malice, if we expect Success: Things are not yet ripe for a Discovery, nor are the People prepar'd for Action: Our Zeal for our Royal Master must be more conspicuous, and some new Laws enacted to ensnare our common Enemy. So politic is Vice, when she is most inveterate! So artfully does she conceal her Anger, when she is most desperately bent upon Destruction! She seems sometimes to halt and pause; *to look this Way and that Way,* for fear a curious Eye should make

an

an unlucky Discovery : She beats a Par- ly to gain Time, and concert new Measures; but she never gives over her main Design, or makes a lasting Truce with her Enemies. Her Hatred to Virtue is innate and perpetual, and can no more be reconciled than Contradictions united. Destruction is always on the Anvil, and War is constantly in Agitation, tho' public Hostilities are not immediately begun, nor Proclamation made to the wide World. Concealment is the Artifice on the Part of Vice, and a great Deal of Deliberation precedes Action. The World must be first amus'd with the Sufferings of the Aggressor, and the Neighbourhood prevented from taking of Parties: Some plausible Exception must be invented, and some Injury or Affront pretended, before the Trumpet is blown, and the Campaign opened.

Thus it fares with Virtue and Vice, as it did with *Carthage* and *Rome*: There was always a jealous Eye between these two potent and rival States, and a secret Mistrust of the growing Greatness of each other; but the Envy was conceal- ed, and the Resentment suppress'd, till the *assisting of an Enemy*, or the an- noying of an *Ally* was the specious Pretence for an *open Rupture*.

The Villain has Honour and Consci- ence in his Mouth as well as the Saint, and hides the Dagger till he can with greater Security give the mortal Wound.

Sermon A Discovery is the first Step to a Defeat,

XIII. and to alarm the Garrison is to provoke a warm Rencounter. *Come on, let us deal*

*Exod. i. 10. wisely with them,* was the politic Contrivance of the King of *Egypt* for the Extirpation of the *Israelites*; and the same Guard and Circumspection is remarkable in every enterprizing Sinner. He must be a raw Practitioner, a very Novice and Dunc in Vice, who does not proceed with Caution, and act upon the surest Grounds, for Fear of a Miscarriage. The Practice in this Case is like that of a Man who collects all his Strength to give an Home Thrust; who endangers his Life if he misses his Aim, and by the Violence of the Motion, throws himself beyond the Probability of a Recovery.

THIRDLY, There is a Worth in a virtuous Person which is sufficiently acknowledged even by his Enemies.

There is something in Virtue so awful and commanding, that her very Presence silences her Enemies, and generally brings her Votaries off with Credit and Honour: There is also something in the Consciences of wicked Men, so stubborn and reluctant, as cannot be totally suppress'd or extinguish'd. The Fury may be intoxicated and laid asleep for a Time, but she wakes in a Surprise and Consternation, and like Persons guilty of Murder, will hover over the Place where the Fact was committed, and betray some unhappy

Cir.



Circumstance which it was the Interest of the Agent to have concealed. Sermon  
XIII.

Sometimes the Heinousness of Guilt, and the internal Lashes and Remorse of Mind, produce a voluntary and genuine Confession of our own Villany, and force us to clear those who have been unjustly traduc'd.

At other Times too much Artifice to conceal a Matter, and an unseasonable Officiousness in our own Vindication, is the first Motive to the Discovery of a Crime.

Sometimes too fierce an Accusation makes the Sincerity of the Accuser call'd in Question, and displays the Innocence of the accused to the Confusion of the Malice and Partiality of his Enemies.

At other Times a pricking Affliction brings the Memorial of persecuted Virtue into our Thoughts, and moves our Lips to such a Confession of our own Guilt, as will magnify the Praises of those whom we have clandestinely injur'd. This was the Case of Jacob's Sons, when being roughly treated in Egypt, and touch'd with Remorse for their Cruelty to Joseph, *They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our Brother, in that we saw the Anguish of his Soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this Distress come upon us.* Gen. xlii. 4

LASTLY, The Nature of the Action is oftentimes such, as, in the Opening and Discussion of it, to convince impartial

Sermon partial Spectators, and strike a Terror  
 XIII. even into the very Judge. Thus *Pilate*,  
 at the Trial of our Saviour, *knowing that*  
*the Jews* for Envy had delivered him,  
 made a private Declaration to his Prose-  
 cutors, *that he found no Fault in him at all*,  
 and before the passing of Sentence of  
 Condemnation, publicly *washed his Hands*  
 to clear himself *from the Blood of that just*  
 Person. St. *John the Baptist* had the  
 Character of being beloved and approv'd  
 of by *Herod*, when a wanton *Herodias*  
 had the Grant of his Head. St. *Paul's*  
*Preaching* was so powerful to make *Felix*  
*tremble*, and *Agrippa* declare himself *al-*  
*most a Christian*.

Mat. xxviii.  
 24, 26.  
 Joh. xviii.  
 38.  
 Act xxiv.  
 25.  
 c. v. 27.

From all these Instances it appears,  
 that there are frequently some Evidences  
 and Tokens of a good Man's Innocence  
 under an unjust Prosecution; and that,  
 upon the Canvass and sifting of Matters,  
 some Testimonies surprizingly arise, and  
 some Confessions are unwarily broach'd, in  
 behalf of the Oppressed.

So instrumental is Virtue by her good  
 Works to display her Integrity, to vindicate  
 her Professors, to convince Spectators,  
 and confound her very Adversaries. She  
 has generally Evidence sufficient upon  
 any Trial or Rencounter, to clear and  
 acquit herself upon the Spot; but if  
 her Accusers should be so clamorous to  
 extort an unjust Sentence against her, and  
 her Judges so weak and partial to grant  
 it, they are willing to shift the Guilt  
 from one to another, and by their Cut-  
 ting

ting and Shuffles shew themselves asham'd Sermon  
of what they have done. The artful **XIII.**  
Judge says, *The Law condemns*, and the  
Jury replies, *Look thou to that*: Consci-  
ence cries out, *Have Nothing to do with*  
*that just Man*, and Reason trembles at  
the Entail of *Blood upon ourselves and our*  
*Children.*

In short, the sincere and unbiass'd Judg-  
ment of all, who are any Ways employ'd  
or concerned against an innocent Person,  
seems to be the same with that of *Festus*  
in the fore-mentioned Case of *St. Paul*, Act. xxvii.  
*Ye see this Man against whom the Multi-* 7, 24  
*tude of the Jews have storm'd for Justice,*  
*and laid many grievous Complaints which*  
*they could not prove; but I have not found*  
*any Thing in him worthy of Death, and it*  
*seemeth to me unreasonable to detain a Pri-*  
*soner without some Proof of the Crimes* v. 17.  
*laid against him.*

FOURTHLY, Notwithstanding the  
Worth of Virtue is always *Privately*, and  
sometimes *Publicly* acknowledg'd by bad  
Men; yet this Acknowledgment is not of  
such perpetual Force and Efficacy, as to  
secure the Interest, and indemnify the  
Persons of good Men.

This abundantly appears from the fore-  
cited Instances of *Pilate*, *Festus*, *Felix*,  
and *Agrippa*, who, notwithstanding their  
general Encomiums of Innocence, and  
studied Harangues upon Justice, did, in  
the Execution of their Office oppress the  
*One*, and contradict the *Other.*

Bad



Sermon

## XIII.

Bad Men have always some favourite Humour to gratify, for the serving of *which* they willingly lay aside all the Restraints, and leap over all the Obstacles which are cast in their Way by Religion and Conscience. Whatever their cool and weigh'd Sentiments may be concerning the Dignity of Virtue; yet when Ambition begins to storm, and Pleasure to inveigle; when Self-love makes her Proposals, and Avarice lays in her destructive Claims; then Reason immediately retires from her Post, and Conscience is obliged to strike under to Sense.

Those that will have Riches and Preferments must run into all Measures, and boggle at nothing for the Accomplishment of their Deligns: One Man must be displac'd, and another advanc'd; an Enemy courted, and a Friend cashier'd; Fidelity must be arraign'd, and Oppression dignified; Innocence must be *turn'd out of the Way*, and Justice *bow down her Head*.

The *Wicked* can never think themselves secure whilst they are in Partnership and Conjunction with the Righteous; neither can they carry on their Intrigues to their own private Advantage, whilst Virtue is a Spy upon their Actions, and Justice looks with an austere and reprimanding Countenance upon their Persons. The *Light* of the *Sun* shines too bright upon *their Works of Darknesh*, and the Example of others is too palpable a Conviction,

tion, and too manifest a Reproach to Sermon  
their Practices. XIII.

Hence 'tis that they are frequently so industrious to mislead the Simple, to impose upon the Credulous, to seduce the Easy, and pervert the Ignorant. Sometimes there appears a great Deal of artful Solicitation and Address in corrupt People, to warp the Principles of Men of Fidelity, and draw them over to the Schemes of their Party. At other Times, there are Leagues and Confederacies amongst themselves to strengthen their Interest, and augment their Numbers, from the Prospect of a Booty. Come, (say they,) *cast in thy Lot among us, Let us have all one Purse: We shall find all precious Substance, we shall adorn our Houses with Spoil. Come on, let us fill our Bellies with delicious Wine, and anoint our Heads with costly Ointments; let us enjoy the good Things that are present, and crown our Temples with Rose-buds before they be withered.*

Prov. i. 13,

14.

Wisd. ii. 7,

8.

But when Intrigues, Persuasions, and Cabals are not so fortunate and successful as may be expected, then the Politicians fly to Malice for Redress, and court Cruelty to their Assistance: Vice throws off the Disguise, and grows clamorous and noisy at the Disappointment, and, like Wind pent up in the Bowels of the Earth, breaks forth with a greater Fury and Impetuosity. Let us lie in wait (say the Ungodly,) for the Righteous, because he is not for our Turn, and he is clean

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Wisd. ii. 12,  
13, 14, 15,  
16.

*contrary to our Doings: He upbraideth us with the offending of the Law, and objecteth to our Infamy the Transgressings of our Education. He professeth to have the Knowledge of God, and calleth himself the Child of the Lord. He was made to reprove our Thoughts; and he is grievous unto us even to behold: For his Life is not like other Mens; his Ways are of another Fashion. We are esteemed of him as Counterfeits: He abstaineth from our Ways as from Filthiness. He pronounceth the End of the Just to be bless'd, and maketh his Boast that God is his Father.*

From this remarkable Passage of the Book of *Wisdom*, (which I have chose to recite at large, because it is so pertinent an Illustration of the Subject under Debate) we may plainly see, that all the Malice, the Solicitations, the Cabals, the Menaces, and Cruelty of wicked Men against the Righteous are, because they will not strike in with their Measures, and patronize them in their Exactions.

A faithful *Daniel* will always be hated by his corrupt Brethren, and as long as his Fidelity and their Corruptions continue, there will be continual Struggles and Artifices to misrepresent him to his Master, and displace him from his Honour.

But let Envy fret, let Faction storm, and Malice hatch never so many Accusations; it is still to be hoped, that the Example of *Daniel* will direct and influence



ence our Christian Statesmen; and that Sermon  
a Sense of Duty, the Instigation of Con- XIII  
science, and the Prevalency of good Prin-  
ciples, will so actuate *Men in Authority*, as  
to promote the Good of the Public, to  
establish the Prosperity of the Church,  
and secure the Properties of their Fel-  
low-Subjects. *Amen.*

SERMON

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## SERMON XIV.

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DAN. vi. 5.

*Then said these Men, We shall not find any Occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the Law of his God.*

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**A**S the Rise of Daniel was very surprizing and extraordinary, and his Preferment in a foreign Court of such an uncommon Nature; so we are not to wonder that a proportionable Degree of Envy should pursue his Honour, and the most artful Stratagems attempt his Disgrace.

The Religion of this Captive being so directly opposite to the Principles of Paganism, and the Strictness of his Morals such a Reproach to the Wantonness of an *Eastern* Court; his Enemies could never want Matter for an Accusation, nor a Pretence to prosecute it. 'Tis true, the Points of his Allegiance and Fidelity were not to be disputed, and the Honour of the King, and the Interest of the Subject, were duly pursued by this  
great

great Statesman; yet his *Jewish* Principles were inconsistent with the Government of the Empire, and the Worship of the *God of Israel* no Ways reconcilable with the *Laws of the Medes and Persians*.

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Here then, say the discontented Politicians, let us fix our Hold; upon this Article let us impeach our Rival; upon this single Footing of Religion, let us disgrace all his public Services, and utterly ruin his Person and Adherents. What, though his political Capacities are great, and his Station high and honourable? What though his Conduct has been unblameable, and his Proceedings legal and regular? Yet his Religion is still a Novelty, and his Way of Worship contrary to the Establishment *which may not be changed*.

*Then said these Men, we shall not find any Occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the Law of his God.*

From this Account of *Daniel* and his *Accusers*, I drew the Six following Observations, in my last Discourse,

FIRST, That there is a Diffidence or Hesitancy in Vice in her Attempts upon Virtue.

SECONDLY, That she proceeds with Caution and Policy for the more effectual Accomplishment of her Designs.

S

THIRDLY,



THIRDLY, That there is a Worth in a virtuous Person, which is sufficiently acknowledged even by his Enemies.

FOURTHLY, That the Fidelity of a Minister renders him odious to his corrupt Brethren.

FIFTHLY, That Religion is the Handle made Use of for his Removal.

SIXTHLY, That, notwithstanding this Plotting and Contrivance of wicked Men, yet still the more religious Men are, the greater Friends they will prove to Government.

The major Part of these *Observations* have been fully treated of in my former Discourse; so that the *Two last* only, with some practical Improvement of the whole, are what I have reserved for your present Entertainment.

FIFTHLY, Then I observe to you from the Text, that the Religion of a good Man is the Handle made Use of for his Removal from a publick Trust: *We must find Occasion against this Daniel, concerning the Law of his God.*

To seek an Occasion indeed upon that Account, is a very preposterous Way of Proceeding, because Innocence has a Right

Right to Protection, and Religion, which Sermon was designed to establish the Civil Government, should not be the Subject of its Resentment and Displeasure. For the

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*Law was added because of Transgressions; Gal. iii. 19. and was not made for a righteous Man, 1 Tim. i. 19. but for the lawless and disobedient, for the Ungodly and for Sinners, for unholy and profane.*

But whatever the Original Design of a wise Legislator should be, and the inflicting of Pains and Penalties ought to aim at; *Daniel's* Prosecutors were of another Mind, and pursued their Scheme with quite contrary Views: They did not form their Plan upon Reason and Morality, nor consider so much what was necessary and expedient to be enacted; as what Malice and Interest might suggest, and Power and Prejudice be able to execute. *Daniel's* Crime was his Fidelity to the King, and the Foundation of his Disgrace must be *the Law of his God.*

Now this Artifice of impeaching a Man upon the Point of Religion, is the more likely to prove successful, because it touches a good Man upon his tender Part, and requires his *Compliance*, where a superior Power has enjoined his *Refusal*. Concessions in less Matters may be consistent with Prudence and Civility; but one *Yot* or *Tittle* must not be diminished from the Essentials of Religion, without affronting the Majesty of Heaven, and subjecting the Transgressor to the *Dam-*

Sermon *nation of Hell.* No Wonder then that

XIV. your good Men are most expos'd to the Displeasure of wicked Princes, and are the greatest Losers by the several Turns and Changes of Government. For in every fresh Settlement or Conquest of a Kingdom, some *new Articles* are broach'd, which an *Old Conscience* can no more comply with, than *Mordecai* could bow down to *Haman*, or *Daniel* worship the *Golden Image* which *Nebuchadnezzar* had set up.

It was your *Gnostics* and Time-servers who avoided the Storm of Persecution in the primitive Age, whilst the orthodox and steady Christian fell a Sacrifice to the bigotted Jew, or the blood-thirsty Gentile.

In later Days, it has been your Men of Latitude and *Comprehension*, who have seldom troubled their Heads about Religion, or stickled concerning the divine Right of Government. Neither Laws nor Oaths disturb their Consciences; neither Usurpation or Inheritance alter their Allegiance. Honour is their Darling, and Interest their Goddess: And for the Sake of these, they continue to have Men's Persons in Admiration, and to give flattering Titles to the Mighty. O King, live for ever! is the daily Salutation of Sycophants: And whoever asks a Petition of any God or Man, save of thee, O King, shall be cast into the Den of Lions, is the Decree of Politicians and Atheists.

Thus Flattery and Idolatry go Hand in Hand! Thus Craft and Hypocrisy sap the

Jud. xvi.  
Job xxxii.  
21.

Dan. vi. 7.



the Foundation of Religion. And Avarice and Ambition are the fruitful Causes of Profaneness and Blasphemy! Sermon XIV.

But a good Man cannot frame his Principles upon these Schemes of Interest, nor hold his Preferment upon such dishonourable Terms. The Law of his God is sacred and inviolable, and a well-grounded Conscience is not to be easily warped and perverted. 'Tis true a good Man is as yielding and compliant as possible in Things of an indifferent Nature; but when Obligations of an higher Concern interfere, then the Language is, *whether it be right in the Sight of God,* Acts iv. 19. *to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.* Preferments are to be relinquish'd, and Infamy embraced; *our Father and Mother forsaken,* and our *Lives and Estates* confiscated, rather than the least Slur should be thrown upon our Honour, the least Reproach rest upon our Conscience.— But

SIXTHLY, The last Observation I shall draw from the Text, is, That the more religious Men are, the greater Advocates they will prove for Government.

That Religion is a Friend to Government is acknowledged by those who are no Friends to Religion. For the Atheist would deduce the Original of it from Policy, and fancies that all its Threats and Promises are to keep the boisterous Multitude in Awe. The most subtil Princes of this World, being sensible of the Prevalency

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valency and Influence of Conscience upon the Allegiance of their Subjects, have wisely fram'd their Edicts and Proclamations for the Encouragement of Religion, and declared their *Willingness* to *distinguish* those by the Marks of their royal Favour, who have distinguish'd themselves by their personal Virtues. Not only *Daniel* in the Text was renowned for his Obedience to *Nebuchadnezzar*, but all other Persons, who, in the several Ages of the World, have been *eminent* for their Piety, have been *eminent* also for their Loyalty.

Should I, upon this Subject, presume to recite to you the Actions of the Prophets and Apostles, of the primitive Christians and Martyrs, I must ransack the *Bible*, and transcribe a great Part of Antiquity. Not the *ten* dreadful *Persecutions* of the *Roman Emperors* have more exercised the *Passive* than their Wars with neighboring Nations signaliz'd the *Active* Courage of their Christian Subjects. Their Princes did always command their *Hands* and their *Purses*, as well as their good *Wishes* and their *Prayers*; but the most barbarous Treatment could not put them upon Reprizals, or force them into Conspiracies and Rebellions. These were Practices which they left to *Pagans* and *Infidels*; the *Name of Christ* being never to be made *use* of to the introducing of Confusion, or the Subversion of Government.

If we trace Rebellion from the grand Author and Parent of it, the *Devil*, down to

to the little Sectaries and Republicans of our own Time, we shall find that all her Mutinies, Insurrections, Conspiracies and Disturbances, have proceeded solely from the Want of true Notions in Religion; and where any Sense of Goodness has prevailed, and genuine Revelation has not been perverted by designing and politic Men, ~~there~~ Countries have been civilized and reclaim'd, and the Sovereigns made happy by the untainted Loyalty and steadfast Obedience of their Subjects. For 'tis Religion only which fixes Mens Principles, and makes them steady and uniform in all their Actions, and does not hurry its Profelytes into Leagues and Covenants, into Parties and Cabals. It promotes Peace and maintains Order; keeps in the Rovings of a turbulent and ungovernable Mind, and bears down all the ambitious Pretences of Mutiny and Faction. St. Jude gives those that turn the Grace of God into Lasciviousness, the odious Character of despising Dominion, and speaking Evil of Dignities. But the Servants of the Lord are unaccustom'd to Strife, and neither open their Mouth, nor lift up their Hand, against the Powers that are set over them. They are as remarkable for their Loyalty as they are for their Religion, and the same Principles which exact their Obedience to the King of Heaven, determine their Submission to his Vice-gerents on Earth.

Religion, in short, is good Order, and good Government; and never shall we



Sermon *hear of Civil Wars and Rumours of Wars,*

XIV. never be infested with Tumults and Com-  
 motions, unless the damnable Doctrine of  
*Resistance* be legitimated, and the Pa-  
 trons and Abettors of it dignified and en-  
 couraged.

I have now done with the *Six* general Observations which I drew from this Text of Scripture: The Remainder of my Time shall be imployed in making of this and the fore-going Discourse as useful as I can, by some practical Inferences.

*First*, From what has been urged concerning the prudent and religious Conduct of *Daniel*, we may gather how much it is the Interest of the Crown to retain such Men on its Side. For by this Means the public Revenues will be duly look'd after, and the Course of Justice impartially administred; subordinate Officers will be confin'd to their Duty, and the Complaints of the Subject prevented, or redress'd.

It was the Advice of *Jethro* to his Son-in-Law *Moses*, when he saw him over-laden with the public Affairs of the *Hebrew* Nation, to chuse for his inferior Ministers, *Able Men, such as fear God, Men of Truth, hating Covetousness; and to make them Rulers of Thousands, and Rulers of Hundreds, Rulers of Fifties, and Rulers of Tens: And let them judge the People at all Seasons: And it shall be, that every great Matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small Matter they shall judge: So that*

Exod. xviii.

21, 24.

*it shall be easier for thy self, and they shall bear the Burden with thee.*

This Distribution of the Government to Persons of Wisdom, Fidelity, Disinterestedness and Integrity, was as beneficial to the Subject as it was easy to the supreme Legislator, and must in the End secure the Property of every private Man, as well as establish the Grandeur and Reputation of the whole Community.

*Daniel*, in the Discharge of that high Trust which was repos'd in him by the *Persian Monarch*, did so far conform to the Qualifications laid down by *Jethro* for a Minister of State, that when the Presidents and Princes sought to find Occasion against him concerning the Kingdom, they could find none Occasion or Fault: Forasmuch as he was Faithful, neither was there any Error or Fault found in him. And I hope it will be no Reflection upon the Wisdom of succeeding Monarchs, nor Reproach to the Fidelity of their Ministry, to wish that all those who are employ'd in the Administration of Public Affairs, may be both almost, and altogether such as this *Daniel*, Dan. vi. 4.

Secondly, From the Contrivances and Conspiracies against *Daniel*, we may gather the Baseness of Faction, which is uneasy at the Promotion, fretful at the Prosperity, and solicitous for the Removal of a deserving Person. She never so much considers the Interest of the State, as the Gratification of her own Spleen,  
nor

Sermon nor the Merit of a Man, as his Attachment to a Party. *As the Scribes and*

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*Matt. xxiii.*  
15

*Pharisees compass'd Sea and Land to make a Profelyte, and when they had got him into their Clutches, made him two-fold more the Child of Hell than themselves;* So Faction is eager and restless for the Augmentation of her Numbers, and the strengthening of her Interest, and leaves no Method unessay'd for the Promotion of her Disciples and the Degradation of her Opposers. She is uneasy under Restraint, and disgusted at a Competitor; attentive to Scandal, and partial in her Accusations; noisy under Disgrace, and cruel in Authority. She asperses the Innocent, and vindicates the Guilty; courts the Daring, and traduces the Conscientious; magnifies the Usurper, and derogates from the Meritorious.

Thirdly, I infer from the foregoing Discourse the Misery of those Princes, who are misled or seduc'd by such Men as were *Daniel's Enemies*. For Kings, who can do no Harm, would be commonly the Instruments of doing more Good, were they not impos'd upon by their Favourites, and incens'd by their Ministers. The Innocent would have no Reason to complain, nor the People to petition, were not the Course of Justice supposed to be stop'd by subordinate Agents, and the Rays of Royal Bounty intercepted by those who are too near to the Throne.



It is impossible (we know) for Princes to have a particular Insight into all Affairs, or to be endow'd with Strength and Abilities to transact all Business in their own Persons. They must see with other Peoples Eyes, and act with other Peoples Hands; know many Things by Report, and form their Judgment upon the Representation of inferior Agents: And how easy is it for Statesmen to raise a Mist, and darken the Prospect? To misrepresent Persons, and aggravate Offences? To spy out Faults where there are really none, and conceal Virtues where they really are?

By the Management of such *Evil Counsellors*, and the Artifice of such designing *Ministers*, the Monarch may be traduc'd, and his People oppress'd; his Power may be weakned, and his Goodness stifled; his Government undermin'd, and his very Life sacrific'd.

*Fourthly* and lastly, From the Carriage of the *Princes and Presidents* towards *Daniel*, I cannot but advise you to mortify your Ambition, Covetousness, Envy, Self-Love; Vices very incident to Statesmen, and which occasion a great Deal of Mischief when they move in higher Spheres. They blend and confound the Order and Regularity of this lower World, and hurry Men into Violence and Barbarity, contrary to the obliging Dictates of Nature, and the settled Rules of common Honesty. Ambition rages like the North, and carries all before it with

Sermon with the Rapidity of a Whirlwind. **Avarice** turns Sycophant and Informer: **Envy** is full of Plots and Complaints; and **Self-Love** will not only sacrifice *Friendship*, but sell her native *Country* for the Sake of a private Interest.

I shall have Occasion to speak more distinctly of some of these Vices in another Place; and all that I shall beg Leave to subjoin at present, is, that the whole black Catalogue of Sins, which *St. Paul* foretold should in succeeding Ages infest the Church, are reduceable to some of these comprehensive and destructive Heads. *In the last Days* (says he) *perilous Times shall come; because Men shall be Lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, Blasphemers, Traitors, heady, high-minded, Truce-breakers, false Accusers, Despisers of those that are good, Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God.*

2 Tim. iii.  
1, 2, 3, 4.

From such Men and their infamous Practices, God of his infinite Goodness deliver this Church and Nation, and settle us and our Posterity upon the lasting Foundations of Truth, Meekness, Justice, and Forbearance, for the Sake of Jesus Christ our merciful Redeemer. *Amen.*

*Christian*

*Christian Sympathy, both in Pro-  
sperity and Adversity.*

A  
S E R M O N

Preached at

B A T H.

ROM. xii. 15.

*Rejoyce with them that do rejoyce,  
and weep with them that weep.*

THE Christian Religion is so far from discountenancing good Nature and good Breeding, that it most earnestly presses and inculcates such Virtues as are requisite to the Establishment of these Qualities. As Pride and Malice are contrary to the Principles of moral Honesty, and render their several votaries as unfit for Society as they are for Devotion; so Stubbornness and Moroseness

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Sermon Moroseness are directly opposite to the  
 XV. Meek and condescending Spirit of the Gos-  
 pel, and Courteousness and Affability are  
 as essential to a Christian as they can be  
 to a Gentleman.

It is true, that in this World we meet  
 with a great Deal of Self-Interest and  
 Design; and the Generality of Mankind  
 are for carrying on their private Schemes  
 under the Disguise of Sincerity, and the  
 plausible Appearances of *Brotherly Love*,  
 when they have Nothing at Heart but  
 Plunder and Devastation, Nothing in Agi-  
 tation but the Ruin and Overthrow of  
 the Innocent and Unguarded. For every  
 Jer. ix. 4, 5, Brother will utterly supplant, and every  
 6. Neighbour will walk with Slanders: And  
 they will deceive every one his Neighbour;  
 and will not speak the Truth: They have  
 taught their Tongue to speak Lies, and weary  
 themselves to commit Iniquity. Thine Ha-  
 bitation is in the midst of Deceit, and thy  
 Friendships are contracted with Hypo-  
 crites and Villains. The Practice of  
 Knavery is become almost universal; and  
 the several Ways of Management, In-  
 trigue, and Circumvention, are the mo-  
 dish and accomplished Studies of the pre-  
 sent Age.

But let the World rub on as it pleases,  
 and Craft and Avarice turn themselves in-  
 to never so many Varieties of Disguise;  
 yet the Frequency of these wicked Pra-  
 ctices cannot alter the Obligation of Chri-  
 stian Duties, or vacate the Plainness and  
*Simplicity of the Gospel.* The Virtues of  
 our

our Religion are of an open, communi-  
cative, and generous Nature, and injoin  
us to look after the Concerns of our  
Neighbour with the same Diligence and  
Affection that we do our own. *The first*

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*and great Commandment of Christianity, is*  
to love the Lord our God with all our Heart,  
and with all our Soul, and with all our  
Mind; and the Second, which is like unto  
it, is to love our Neighbour as our self.

Matt. xxii.  
37, 38, 39.

Nay, there is such a close Connection  
and strict Dependence between these two  
Duties, that the Former is lifeless and un-  
active, useless and insignificant in its spe-  
culative Capacity, and cannot be duly  
actuated without the Concurrence and  
Observation of the Latter: For, if a  
Man say, I love God, and hateth his Bro-  
ther, he is a Liar: For he that loveth not  
his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he  
love God whom he hath not seen? And this  
Commandment have we from him, That he  
who loveth God, love his Brother also.

1 Joh. iv.  
20, 21.

The Love of our Neighbour is a busy  
and vigorous Principle, and can no more  
be at Rest without pursuing its Designs,  
than Fire forget to burn, or Water cease  
to flow. He that loves another will pro-  
secute his Interest, solicit his Cause, ad-  
vise him in his Dangers, assist him in his  
Necessities, triumph in his Prosperity,  
and condole in his Misery.

Rejoyce with them that do rejoyce, and  
weep with them that weep.

These

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These Words do naturally divide themselves into two Particulars, and recommend to us these two Christian Duties.

FIRST, A Joy and Satisfaction which all good Christians should express, at the Prosperity of their Brethren; *Rejoyce with them that do rejoyce.*

SECONDLY, A Sympathy and Fellow-feeling with them in their Calamities and Misfortunes; *Weep with them that weep.*

The former of these Subjects may not be unsuitable to those Congratulations and Returns of Thanks, which the surprizing Cures of this *Place* do afford: And the latter may be adapted to those melancholy Scenes, which the frequent Disasters of human Life may produce, or the Sickness and Death of our Relations present us with.

FIRST, We are enjoined to *rejoyce* with our Christian Brethren, in all their Prosperity: And this Duty will discover itself two Ways;

*First*, In our Joy for their *Temporal*,  
*Secondly*, In our Joy for their *Religious*  
*Welfare.*

*First*, We are to rejoyce with our Brother for the Success and Prosperity of his  
Temporal



Temporal Concerns: And that whether these Concerns relate to his *Body*, his *Mind*, his *Reputation*, his *Estate*, or his *Family*. Sermon XV.

*First*, As to the *Body* of our Neighbour, we are to rejoyce when it is in such a State of Health and Ease as to perform the Functions and Duties of Life with Cheerfulness and Vigour, and is not subject to any of those untimely Wastings and Decays, which must necessarily prevent it from the Discharge of that honest Calling and Profession which a Man has dedicated himself to, and which his Station and Subsistence in the World should oblige him to exercise.

We are farther engaged by this Duty of Joy to contribute our utmost Assistance towards the corporal Ease and Welfare of our Neighbour, and in a friendly Way to accommodate him with such comfortable Conveniences as may sweeten Life and prolong his Days.

They would do well to consider this, who harden their Bowels against an Object of Misery, and when they see a Man *wounded and naked and half-dead*, like the *Priest and Levite* in the Gospel, *pass by on the other Side*, to avoid the Importunity of his Prayers, and the Expence of relieving him. Ld. x. 30, 31, 32.

Neither are they less concern'd in the Breach of this Precept, who are of a passionate and revengeful Temper, and in their mad and debauch'd Humours are addicted to Brawling and Contention, and

T

seem

Sermon seem willing to gratify their devilish Re-  
 XV. sentment by breaking the Bones, or  
 ~~~~~ maiming and abusing the Bodies of those  
 they quarrel and contend with.

Secondly, Another Matter of Joy, is the Welfare of the *Mind* of our Neighbour. I do not here consider the *Mind* in a religious, but in a temporal Respect; and our Joy upon this Account is to express and notify itself, when our Neighbour continues endow'd with such Soundness of Wit, Memory, Discretion, and Judgment, as to manage and transact his worldly Affairs, for the Honour of himself, and the Support of his Family. We are to rejoice that no Diseases have seiz'd his Head, or shock'd his Brain; no melancholy Perturbations over-spread his Mind; nor any Drowsiness or Stupidity benumb'd his Thoughts and Spirits: But that the Man is quick in his Perceptions, vigilant in his Applications, nimble in his Dispatches, and conducts all his Undertakings by the Eye of Reason, and the probable Arguments of Success.

Thirdly, We are to rejoice at the *Reputation*, or *good Name* of our Neighbour.

The Way to live comfortably in this World, is to be respected in that Station or Post, where it hath pleas'd Providence to place us; and I think all those who pretend to Friendship or Christianity, ought to contribute towards the Advancement of their Brother, and heartily to congratulate every Addition to his Honour

hour or Pre-eminence. There are a great many Conveniences depending upon a good Name, and the Comforts and Felicities of human Life are both augmented and perfected by it. We are bound by the Rules of Nature and Religion, to be helpful and assistant to others in all the good Offices of Charity and Beneficence, and to triumph and glory in the Execution of our pious Designs. The Rise of our Brother is our Exaltation; our Happiness is to commence with his, and we are to be even dignified and distinguish'd by the Honours and Titles conferr'd upon him.

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Fourthly, Another Matter of Joy to a good Christian, is the *Substance* or *Wealth* of his Brother.

If we are oblig'd to be charitable for the Support and Maintenance of others, we may well conclude that we ought to be joyful when Providence takes this expensive Work out of our Hands, and puts our Friends into prosperous and flourishing Circumstances. When God Almighty turned the Captivity of Job, and gave him twice as much as he had before, we read that all his Brethren, and all his Sisters, and all they that had been of his Acquaintance before, did eat Bread with him in his House, and every Man gave him a Piece of Money, and every one an Earring of Gold. This Example of Job's Friends and Relations may excite us to a proportionable Degree of Joy and Gratitude, upon any favourable Conjunction,

Job xl. 10,

11.

Sermon or prosperous Accession to the Wealth of
 XV. our Brother. We are not barely with
 ~~~~~ our Lips to complement our Neighbour  
 upon his good Fortune, and to bleed  
 and repine inwardly at the same; but we  
 are to glory in the Success of his Indus-  
 try, and to view the plentiful Encrease  
 and Product of his Labours, with the  
 same cordial Transport and Satisfaction  
 which he himself beholds them.

*Fifthly*, The last Subject of our Joy,  
 is the Prosperity of our Neighbour's *Fa-  
 mily*. Any Success which his Children or  
 Posterity meet with, is to be entertain'd  
 and welcom'd by us with Chearfulness  
 and Thanksgiving: If, (for Example)  
 they are diligent in their Professions, suc-  
 cessful in their Undertakings, laborious  
 in their Studies, or happy in their Settle-  
 ments in this World, we are to act the  
 Parts of common Friends and Parents,  
 and with joyful Eyes and grateful Hearts  
 to survey their Proficiency, and congratu-  
 late their Prosperity.

So much, my Brethren, may suffice for  
 a brief and succinct Survey of those tem-  
 poral Blessings which we are to be joy-  
 ful for our Neighbour's Enjoyment of.  
 Proceed we

*Secondly*, To the Consideration  
 of that more sublime Joy, which  
 we are to manifest upon his religious  
 Concerns.

As Religion is the main and ultimate  
 End of our living in this World, so the  
 Prosecution of this End, and the steady  
 Ad-

Adherence to the Means of obtaining it, Sermon  
XV.  
 should be no small Satisfaction to all charitable and well-disposed Christians. We know that our Saviour came into the World *to seek and to save that which was lost*; and all his Followers are obliged to prosecute the same generous Designs with their blessed Master, and whenever their Labours take Effect, an agreeable Complacency will inevitably result from this Success.

St. Luke has assured us, *that there is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God over one Sinner that repenteth*: Luk. vii. 10. And certainly, if the immortal Spirits, in the midst of celestial Enjoyment, receive an Addition to their Happiness by the Conversion of their Fellow-Creatures; the Faithful upon Earth ought so far to imitate the Choir in Heaven, as to be transported into a divine Rapture upon any new Proficiency or Encrease of their Neighbour's Virtue.

*The Delight of the Psalmist was in the Saints upon Earth, and such as excel'd in Goodness. St. Paul's Heart's Desire and Prayer to God for Israel was, that they might be saved*: Ps. xvi. 3.  
Rom. x. 1. And St. John asserts, *that he had no greater Joy than to bear that his Children, (that is, those whom he had converted, and as it were begotten to Christianity,) walked in the Truth.* 3 Joh. iv. Agreeable to these Examples we find many reviving Precepts, many comfortable Exhortations, and melting Expressions of Joy in the several Epistles of the

Sermon great *Apostle to the Gentiles*, occasion'd  
 XV. principally by the Number of Converts  
 to the Christian Faith, and that Assurance of Salvation which their Zeal and Perseverance intitled them to. I shall mention two or three of these Passages as the most suitable Conclusion of this Division, and so hasten to the remaining general Head of my Text.

Phil. ii. 1, 2. *If there be any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies; fulfil ye my Joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same Love, being of one Accord, of one Mind. For this we wish, even your*  
 1 Cor. xiii. *Perfection: And therefore, my Brethren,*  
 Phil. iv. 1. *dearly beloved, and longed for, my Joy and Crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly*  
 1 Thes. iii. *beloved. For what Thanks can we render*  
 2. *to God again for you, for all the Joy wherewith we joy for your Sakes before our God?*

SECONDLY, As in the Case of Joy, we are to be elated; so in the Passion of Sorrow, we are to be depress'd, and to have a Sympathy and Fellow-feeling with our Neighbour in his Misfortunes; *Weep with them that weep.*

*Ut ridentibus arident, ita flentibus adflent  
 Humani vultus.*

Mankind are apt enough to flock about a plentiful Fortune, and to complement those whose Circumstances and Stations are considerable in the World: But Ad-  
 versity



verty procures no Friends, and a sinking Estate is avoided, like a falling House. It may not, perhaps, be in every One's Power to extricate an honest Man from those Difficulties and Encumbrances which are brought upon him; but the Compassion of the Soul is what Reason suggests, and what Christianity obliges to exercise towards the Afflicted. If any Disaster befalls another, I should participate with him in his Trouble. If any Ignominy or Disgrace betides him, or his Family, I should be humbled and debased upon his Account. His Shame should cast down my Countenance; his Disappointments bring down my Spirits; his Necessities affect my Body; and his Sickneses torment my Soul.

When I read the fine Discourses of the *Stoics* upon the Candor and Benignity of human Nature, and consider their Way of inculcating universal Love and Beneficence, by Arguments drawn from our *common Original*, and our near *Affinity* to one another *as Men*; I am strangely surprized, that they should rank Compassion amongst human Infirmities, and remove all its tender Impressions to the greatest Distance from their accomplished Philosopher.

I fancy that if some of the zealous Professors of Christianity had been aware of this ill-natur'd Assertion, they would not have thought the Maxims of *Stoicism* so very well adapted to the Doctrine of

Sermon the Gospel, nor bestow'd such Encomiums upon the sullen Professors of that  
 XV. Philosophy.

The *stoical* Notion of *Indolence* is an Affront to Humanity, and robs the Soul of all those heavenly Properties which distinguish her from Brutes, as well as render her useful to rational Beings. For how comes it to pass, that Virtue is represented of such an obliging and communicative Nature, and thought to be always tendering her best Services for the Good of the Universe, if there were not something within to force and instigate, something to keep the Wheels of the Mind in Motion, and form all those goodly Inclinations and Dispositions which are so eager and pressing to appear in *Act*? Compassion (if I may use the Expression) is the *first Mover* in the *inward Man*; the great and leading Principle which infuses Life and Activity into all *social* Virtues, and generously interposes upon every Complaint of Indigence and Misfortune. It is Compassion which first inflames the Heart, and then directs the Hand, which represents the Objects in Distress to Charity, and suggests the most plausible Schemes for their Support and Deliverance. It is Compassion which awakens and excites; which pleads and implores. It is Compassion which lays the Grievances and Oppressions of Widows and Orphans before our Courts of Judicature; and brings even the Tears of Captives and

and Prisoners into the Presence of Nobles, Sermon  
and the Palaces of Princes. XV.

Whoever finds himself backward in this Duty of Compassion, may have Recourse to the Example of God himself, and the Actions of holy Men under the *Old Testament*; to the Life of our blessed Saviour, and the Practice of his Apostles under the *New*: And he can never want the most cogent Arguments to soften his Mind, and stimulate his Obedience.

God, we know, is a Being free from all Passion, and yet in Condescension to our Infirmities, and to encline us to be *merciful even as he is merciful*, he is pleas'd to be set forth in Scripture as *the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Consolation*; a Being which is full of Bowels and Yearning, and all over Tenderness and Affection; a Being which is grieved for the Misery of *his Chosen, and afflicted in all the Afflictions of his People*. Of this Tenderness and Compassion, there are ten thousand Instances in holy Writ; but I shall add but one more to what I have alluded to already, which I shall venture to recite at large, because I take it to be one of the most melting and pathetic Pieces of Oratory that is extant, and which gives us the most ravishing Idea of the Benignity of the divine Nature, and the Prevalence of Almighty Love. You will find it in the 11th Chapter of *Hosea*, and the 8th and 9th Verses: *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deli-*



Sermon *ver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee*  
 XV. *as Admah? How shall I set thee as Ze-*  
 boim? Mine Heart is turned within me,  
 my Repentings are kindled together. I will  
 not execute the Fierceness of mine Anger, I  
 will not return to destroy Ephraim: For I  
 am God, and not Man, the holy One in the  
 midst of thee, I will not enter into the  
 City.

Next to the Compassion of God the Father, we have a memorable Example of it in the great Redeemer of Mankind, who by relieving the Necessities, and healing the Diseases of the Multitude, by weeping over Jerusalem, and groaning in Spirit for his beloved Lazarus, has taught us to compassionate the Ruin of our native Country, to sympathize in the Afflictions of our Brethren, and to condole the Decease of our Friends.

Job xxx.  
 25.  
 ch. xxxi.  
 19, 20.

The holy Men both under the Law and the Gospel, have trod exactly in the Steps of God the Father, and his bless'd Son Christ Jesus. *Did not I weep, (says Job) for him that was in Trouble? Was not my Soul grieved for the Poor? If I have seen any perish for want of Cloathing, or any Poor without Covering: If his Loins have not bless'd me, and if he were not warm'd with the Fleece of my Sheep; then let mine Arm fall from my Shoulder-blade, and mine Arm be broken from the Bone.*

Ps. xxxv.  
 12, 13, 14

The Psalmist informs us of a Sort of People, who rewarded him Evil for Good, to the great Discomfort of his Soul: Ne-  
 vertheless

nevertheless (says he) when they were sick, I put on Sack-cloth, and bumbled my Soul with Fasting: Notwithstanding their Perverseness and Ingratitude, I behaved myself as though it had been my Friend, or my Brother; I went heavily as one that mourneth for his Mother. Sermon XV.

St. James makes it the very Essence and Perfection of pure Religion and undefiled, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Distress; and upon this Principle, he passes Sentence upon the obdurate and relentless, and assigns those over to Judgment without Mercy, who have been rigorous in their Proceedings, and shewed no Mercy or Pity to others. Jam. i. 27. ch. ii. 13.

St. John stiles the Hater of his Brother a Murderer, and carries the Duty of Compassion to such an Height as the laying down of our Lives for the Brethren. 1 Joh. iii. 15, 16.

St. Paul's Example is yet of a larger Extent, and is remarkable for an universal Sympathy and Compassion. He appeals to the Omniscience of Christ, and the Witness of his own Conscience in the Holy Ghost, for the great Heaviness and continual Sorrow in his Heart for others; and then, in an uncommon Strain of Rhetoric, sets forth the most heroic Charity, in espousing the Cause of the Distress'd, and wishing himself even accursed from Christ, for his Brethren, his Kinsmen according to the Flesh. As this Apostle had the Care and Superintendency Rom. ix. 1, 2. v. 3. 1 Cor. xi. 28.

Sermon dency of all the Churches upon his  
 XV. Thoughts; so his Fatherly Tenderness  
 and Indulgence was as extensive as his  
 Commission, and reach'd to every parti-  
 cular and individual Member of his  
 Charge. *Who is weak, (says he) and I  
 am not weak? Who is offended, and I  
 burn not? If any one is sick, I parti-  
 cipate in his bodily Pains: If any one  
 is disturbed in Mind, I have my Share  
 of his Melancholy and Confusion: If  
 any one has apostatiz'd from the Faith,  
 I am in Pursuit of the lost Sheep, and  
 constantly inflam'd with an holy Zeal  
 for his Restoration.*——

1 Cor. xi.  
 29.

Phil. iv. 14,  
 16.

In the last Place, the *Philippians* are  
 highly extoll'd for communicating with  
 this their Apostle in his Afflictions, and  
 for sending once again in Thessalonica un-  
 to his Necessity: And the *Hebrews* have  
 a most affectionate Charge, towards the  
 Close of that Epistle which is inscrib'd  
 Heb. xiii. 3. to them, *To remember those that are in  
 Bonds as bound with them; and those  
 which suffer Adversity, as being their selves  
 also in the Body.*

*These Things, my Beloved, are written  
 for our Admonition and Instruction, and  
 are Presidents upon Record for our  
 Practice and Imitation; and unless  
 we feel the same Tenderness and Re-  
 sentment upon the Sufferings of our  
 Brethren, which Saints and Confessors  
 were eminent for, we renounce our Re-  
 lation to Christ, and sacrifice our In-  
 terest in the Gospel. For, as the Chri-  
 stian*



Christian Dispensation seems purposely calculated for the Benefit of Mankind, XV. and to be form'd upon the Plan of Good-Nature and Civility; so we find

Compassion at the Head of all her exalted Virtues, and making the most considerable Figure through the whole Life of a practical Believer. By what secret Bands and Ligaments are Christians united to their mystical Head, and how are the most distant Members of the Church refresh'd by a friendly Circulation of good Offices? *There is to be no Schism in the Body; no rending or disjoining of Parts; but all the Limbs are to act in Harmony and Consort, and have the same mutual Care and Affection one for another. And whether one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it: Or one Member be honoured, all the Members rejoice with it. The Impressions are reciprocal, the Concern is universal, and the Interest of every Individual is equally the same. They all rejoice with those that do rejoice, and all of them weep with those that weep.*

I have now done with the two Duties of Joy and Sorrow, which a good Man ought to express towards his Fellow-Christian, both in Prosperity and Adversity: And I shall without any farther Delay proceed to draw some short Inferences from the whole, and so to conclude.

*First,*

Sermon *First*, The Duty of *rejoycing* in the  
 XV. Text will exclude all that Self-Interest  
 and Narrowness of Spirit, which is so  
 prevalent in the designing Part of the  
 World.

Covetousness cramps and confines a Man in his Undertakings, and makes all his Projects centre in himself; but Joy enlarges and dilates the Soul, and brings in the Materials of Happiness from external Objects. If a Man would but consider himself as a Citizen of the whole World, and related to all the Posterity of *Adam*; what an agreeable Scene of Action would open upon him? How many pleasing Diversions would bear down the tedious Hours of Life? What innocent Amusements, and secret Complacencies would constantly arise from the Happiness and Prosperity of some of his Relations? Where now would be the Management in *Buying and Selling*, and where the Policy in *getting of Gain*? Where would be the Schemes of *joining House to House, and Field to Field*? Where the Vanity of aggrandizing Families, and calling the Lands after own Name?

— *Redeunt Saturnia Regna.*

Poverty would be a Stranger upon Earth, and Oppression must cease from among the Children of Men. The Landmarks would remain unenvied, and Property be secur'd by the Laws of Nature. The Monarch would enjoy his Domi-

Dominions, and the Subject his Liberty. Sermon  
*Naboth* might possess his *Vineyard*, and *XV.*  
*Ahab* survey it with joyful Eyes. For, 

Secondly, This Duty of *rejoycing* at our  
 Neighbour's Good must necessarily ex-  
 clude all *Envy* and *Repining* at another's  
 Prosperity.

Joy and Envy are as opposite as  
 Light and Darknes, and it is utterly  
 impossible that they should co-habit or  
 reside in the same Breast. The greatest  
 Instance we have of Envy, is in the  
*Devil*, who being thrust from the Pre-  
 sence of God, with all his cursed Ac-  
 complices, for their Conspiracy and Re-  
 bellion in Heaven, is always studying to  
 wreak his Revenge upon Mankind, and  
 to bring the Heirs of Happiness to the  
 same *Place of Torment* with himself.

Now every one who gives Way to  
 Envy, is in Confederacy with Hell for  
 his own Ruin, and acts by the Instiga-  
 tion of Satan for the Furtherance of  
 his own Damnation. The envious Man  
 has banish'd from his Breast that serene  
 and joyful Temper of Mind which is  
 so conspicuous in the blessed Inhabitants  
 of Paradise; and he harbours nothing  
 within himself, but the Indignation,  
 Malice, and Revenge of damned Spirits,  
 and is never better pleas'd than in an Op-  
 portunity of exerting his Cruelty upon  
 the Innocent and Defenceless. Instead  
 of shewing any brotherly Joy or Satis-  
 faction at the Prosperity of another, *he*  
*sitteth*, like the *ungodly* Person describ'd  
 by



Sermon by the Psalmist, lurking in the thievish  
 XV. Corners of the Street, and doth ravish the  
 Poor, when he getteth him into his Net.

Pl. x. 8, 10.

Thirdly, As the Subject of Joy will arm us against *Self-Interest* and *Envy*; so the Duty of Compassion will humble our *Pride*, excite our *Charity*, and provoke our Prayers: Of each of which I shall beg Leave to speak a Word or Two briefly, by way of Inference from the second General of my fore-going Discourse.

First then, If we are to weep with them that weep, this will humble and mortify our *Pride*, and bring us to a more candid and benign Temper. *Pride*, we know, is of a lofty and assuming Nature, and is apt to carry its Eye towards its Superiors with Malice, and its Inferiors with Disdain. A proud Man can hardly behold an Object of Misery without Storms and Insults, nor be induc'd to pity in others what he does not feel in his own Person. But how seasonable are the Interpositions of Mercy in this Flame and Combustion? Of what admirable Use will Compassion be, to bring down the Roughness of this haughty Man, and reduce him to a Christian and moderate Disposition? Like Oil, it will supple and insinuate itself into the most obdurate Parts, and soften those Swellings and Tumors which *Pride* is apt to raise to a Ferment in a Choleric Breast. — But

Secondly,

Secondly, Compassion is instrumental to- Sermon  
wards the Production of *Charity*. XV.

He that sees another in Misery, will not barely be contented to shed a Tear for him, but will proceed farther in the good Offices of Assistance and Support. What affects his Heart, will quickly influence his Hand; and Alms will be forward to relieve, what Good-Nature consoles and laments. *Charity never faileth*; she is never wearied or fatigued in her Applications; never sour'd or disgusted at the Meanness of her Employment. She passes by a Palace, and visits a Cot; pays her constant Attendance in Sicknes and in Prisons, and *pours Oil and Balsam into the Wounds of the naked Traveller*.

Thirdly, The last Property which I shall mention of Compassion, is to *pray* for the Afflicted.

It may not, perhaps, be in the Power of every one to redress those Grievances which he sincerely laments. There may be a Willingness of Mind, but the Ability of the Pocket may be wanting: And in such Exigences, it is the Duty of a Christian, to use his Interest with another, for what he is not solvent himself. Every one has not the *Riches of this World* in his Power; but every one may, (if it be not his own Fault,) secure a Share in the Affections of that *most high Possessor of Heaven and Earth*, who has reserv'd the absolute Disposal of all Things within his own Hands. Prayer is the Conduit which conveys Blessings to this lower  
U World,

Sermon World, and the Poor as well as the Rich  
XV. have the Advantage of this Engine, and  
may be serviceable to their Generation,  
by their Piety and Devotion.

Let none, therefore, deny his Assistance to the Afflicted; but let what is wanting in *Alms*, be supply'd by *Prayer*. Let every one by *Supplication and Intercession* make his Request known in the Behalf of a necessitous Brother, and it is not to be doubted, but the Event will answer the Zeal of the Petitioner, and the Necessity of the Sufferer.

Now to God the Father, the Son, and  
the Holy Ghost, be render'd, &c.

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The



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*The Discontented Statesman.*

IN THREE  
SERMONS.

---

EST. v. 13.

*Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's Gate.*

**T**HESE Words are the bitter Sermon and envious Reflection of *wicked Haman*; a Person as remarkable for the Strangeness of his *Rise*, and the Suddenness of his *Fall*, as any Favourite or Courtier in History. For, from whatever Illustrious or Royal Family, *Haman* might originally spring, most Writers are of Opinion, that the Grandeur of his Pedegree was now very much sunk and eclips'd, and that, upon his present Promotion, he was but in mean and ordinary Circumstances. It is certain, that the Name of this Person nowhere occurs in *Holy Writ*, but in the Book of *Esther*; and we have not so much

XVI.

Preached  
1711.

Sermon much as Mention of him there, till he  
 XVI. was pitch'd up by *King Akasuerus* for  
 the most honourable Post in the Govern-  
 ment.

Whereas other People have required Time to wriggle themselves into a Court by the continued Exercise of Flattery and Address, and do proceed leisurely to Preferment by certain intermediate Degrees and Gradations; he stepp'd forth a compleat Favourite at once, and commenc'd the First and Ruling *Minister of State*, without making his Way through any inferior Employments, or approving his Fidelity by any former Services.

Thus he seem'd, like the Sun in a cloudy Day, to break forth with an uncommon and surprizing Lustre, and, at once, to over-top all the *Nobles and Princes of an hundred and seven and twenty Provinces*, by the Eminence of his Station, and the Extent of his Power.

Rarely do we read of such an unaccountable *Rise* of a Man, and more rarely of such a sudden and deplorable *Fall*. Never was there a more extravagant and over-grown Favourite, and never a Minister who more abus'd the Favours, and perverted the Authority of his Master: So that he stands upon Record, for a Warning to Men in high and slippery Places, and is a miserable Example of the Fickleness of Fortune, and the Justice of Providence. However we are to remember, that he had his *Days of Prosperity*, and received the *good Things*  
 of

of this World in the greatest Abundance Sermon  
and Superfluity. If we believe the De- XVI.  
scription which himself has given us of  
his own Possessions, we may conclude,  
that Nothing, within the Compass of hu-  
man Enjoyment, was with-holden from  
him: The Treasures of the whole Earth  
seem to be ransack'd to gratify him; and  
whatever his *Eyes* could see, or his *Heart*  
*desire*, was the generous Gift of an indul-  
gent Prince: Yet all these Civilities were  
not sufficient to humour the Pride, or  
master the Ambition of this insatiable  
Man. His Head was always contriving,  
and his Hands executing; his Desires  
were impatient, and his Expectations  
boundless; his Demands exorbitant, and  
his Attempts impious.

But notwithstanding all this, he was  
the most dastardly and mean-spirited Per-  
son that was ever admitted to a Court, and  
had Nothing great and heroic in his Na-  
ture to recommend him to the Service of  
the most potent Monarch upon Earth. He  
was a Slave to his own Ambition, and an  
Usurper upon his Fellow-Subjects; a  
Traitor and a Sycophant; a Tyrant and  
a Coward, at the same Time. If he was  
foil'd in his Proposals, he grew sorrowful  
and dejected; if discover'd in his For-  
geries and Mismanagements, he flew into  
Passion and Disorder. The Pomp of his  
outward Condition was not able to secure  
the Serenity of his Mind; nor could the  
pleasing Thoughts of Riches and Ho-  
nour counter-balance the Inconvenience



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of the most trifling Evil. Every Difficulty was a Match for his Courage, and every Disappointment too hard for his Patience. The most inconsiderable Obstacles would terrify and affright his Soul, and the meanest Competitor fret and gall him. The Height of his Station could not make him overlook a poor *captive Jew*, and the Want of a Bow or a Cringe was enough to fully his Glory, and force his Purple to sit uneasy upon his Shoulders.

*All this, (says he) availeth me Nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's Gate.*

For the more clear Handling and Illustration of these Words, I think it not improper to do these *Five Things*.

FIRST, To enquire into those Possessions and Enjoyments, which *Haman* declar'd *availed him nothing*.

SECONDLY, To make some Remarks upon that ambitious and envious Temper of his, which render'd him miserable under such flourishing Circumstances.

THIRDLY, To search out the true Ground and Foundation of this Fury and Resentment against *Mordecai the Jew*.

FOURTHLY, To shew the ill Consequences of this Resentment, both

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both in Respect of *himself* and his *Family*. Sermon  
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FIFTHLY, To raise some general Observations from this Matter of Fact for the Conduct and Management of human Life.

FIRST, I am to enquire into those Possessions and Enjoyments, which *Haman* declared *availed him nothing*.

If we would take a true Estimate of *Haman* in all his Pomp and Grandeur, and survey him in his several glittering Relations, we must consult the History of his Rise and Promotion, as it is recorded in this Book of *Esther*: And what we here find scatter'd and dispers'd thro' different *Chapters*, shall be reduced to a shorter Compass, and presented to your View under these following Heads.

*First*, The King's Favour to him.

*Secondly*, His Honour.

*Thirdly*, His Power.

*Fourthly*, His Riches.

*Fifthly*, His Children.

All these external Blessings, *Haman* was in actual Possession of, as appears by his own Declaration in the 5th Chapter of this Book of *Esther*, and the 10th, 11th, 12th Verses; where, in the Height of Transport, he unbosom'd himself to his Wife and his Friends, and with an Air of Greatness acquainted them with

Sermon his wonderful Interest both in the King  
 XVI. and the Queen, and the profound Com-  
 ~~~~~ plements and Respects which were paid  
 him at Court. For *he told them* (says
 the Text) *of the Glory of his Riches, and
 the Multitude of his Children, and all the
 Things wherein the King had promoted him,
 and how he had advanced him above the
 Princes and Servants of the King. And
 he said moreover, yea, Esther the Queen
 did let no Man come in with the King un-
 to the Banquet, that she had prepar'd, but
 himself, and that to Morrow he was invited
 unto her also with the King.*

These (one would think) were Civili-
 ties and Obligations enough to be heap-
 ed upon the Head of a single Man:
 These were Favours sufficient to satisfy
 the Avarice and Ambition of the most
 hungry Courtier. For what Plan of
 Worldly Felicities can the Mind possibly
 frame to herself, which doth not come
 under One, or more of the fore-men-
 tioned Considerations? So that Earthly
 Enjoyments must be very empty and
 superficial, very false and deluding in
 themselves, or *Haman's Humour* must be
 unaccountable, and his Resentment foolish.
 For what could the covetous Man aim at
 more, than large Possessions, and full
 Coffers? What could the crafty and in-
 triguing *Politician* pretend to, but the
 Ear of his Prince, and the Management of
 his Kingdom? What could *Envy* propose
 to her Votaries, but the Advancement
 of themselves, and the degrading of
 others?

others? What could *Pride* and *Ambition* Sermon any farther grasp after, than the Monopoly of public Honours and Preferments, and the Probability of an Entail upon a numerous Progeny? XVI.

All these Things *Haman* enjoy'd in a very plentiful Degree, and yet *all* of them, by his own Confession, *availed him Nothing*.

It may, therefore, be worth our while to give every one of these suppos'd Blessings a distinct and separate Consideration, to the End that we may more fully discover, in the Progress of this Discourse, how illy *Haman's* Complaints were grounded, and withal may learn *what Confidence* is to be plac'd in the Favour of *Princes*, and how we ought to behave ourselves, when advanced to an higher Station, than our Brethren.

First, Let us consider the Honour and Interest which *Haman* had with the King. This was very considerable, as well in Respect of his own Advancement, as the pulling down and disgracing of others. 'Twas a Privilege big in it self, and fruitful in its Consequences; the Support of his present Happiness, and the Earnest of Futurity. What Pains are some People at, to get a Footing at Court, and procure an Interest in Princes? And what Variety of Shapes and Postures must they appear in, to humour the Vanity of those that sit at the Helm? Their Tempers must be fawning, and their Compliances

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pliances slavish ; their Principles loose, and their Consciences profligate : And yet notwithstanding all their bending and sneaking, all their Flattery and projecting ; how many fruitless Sallies may they make before their Designs take Effect ? and what Time and Treasure may be expended before they get into the Road of Preferment ? This Man must be intreated, and that Man brib'd ; and yet fresh Difficulties will perpetually arise, and new Friends and a better Interest are always wanting. Unexpected Rubs and Obstacles may be laid in our Way by restless Rivals and contrary Pretenders : Aspersions may be thrown upon our Reputation, and Vouchers demanded for our Zeal to a Party : And when all is done, we shall be constantly subject to the Contentions of an opposite Faction, and must be content to sacrifice our Liberty in Hopes of a precarious Preferment.

But *Haman* had already pass'd through these tiresome Applications, and surmounted the most important Difficulties. He was settled on the Eminence and Pinnacle of Honour, and reign'd the darling and uncontested Favourite in the Affections of his Royal Master.

If we measure the King's Favour by the Grants he made, and the Privileges he invested *Haman* with, never was there a more successful Courtier, never a more formidable Subject. His Interest was so riveted and cemented, that he dreamed of

of no Storms from Court, dreaded no *Sermon*
Acts of Resumption, nor entertain'd the *XVI.*
 least Suspicion of a Disgrace or Removal. He was both Counsellor and Agent for the King; privy to his Secrets, and instructed with his Life; his Companion in the Palace, and his Deputy in the Empire; the Sharer in his Fortunes, and the Manager of his Revenues. He had the Heart and the Affections of his Master at his Beck, and the Honours and Preferments of the Court at his Disposal. He could advance and displace whomsoever he thought convenient; encourage Petitions, or delay Business at his Pleasure. With a Word, he could procure an Edict for the Extirpation and Slaughter of a whole Nation, and use the Royal Authority for the more speedy Dispatch and Execution of his Designs.

Secondly, This Account of the King's Favour towards *Haman* may lead us to take an Estimate of the Honour which he conferr'd upon him.

For if Honour consists in *Titles and Homage*, *Haman* had as much of it, as a Sovereign could bestow, or a Subject receive: For all the King's Servants that were in the King's Gate, bowed and revered him: And the King had promoted and advanced him, and set his Seat above all the Princes that were with him.

Est. iii. 1, 2.

Now what farther Idea can we have of Splendor and Magnificence? What can we imagine more Lordly and Despotic, than to see all the King's Household

Sermon hold lying at the Feet of one single
 XVI. Man? To hear the Multitude pursue him
 with *Hosannaes* and Acclamations, and
 the Chief Princes and Nobility of the
 Kingdom paying Homage and Obeisance
 to his Foot-stool? These were such
 Signs and Testifications of Respect, such
 unusual Stretches of Complaisance and
 Civility, that one can't easily discern
 what higher Pitch of Glory *Haman* could
 aspire after, or what farther Proposals
 he could make to his Ambition: For he
 had no Superior upon Earth, but only
 his Royal Master, and all the Honours
 of the Empire seem'd to be heaped up-
 on the Head of himself and his Family.
 His Eyes saw little else but Slaves and
 Vassals about him, and his Ears were ac-
 customed to Nothing but the Flattery
 and Adoration of Inferiors and Depen-
 dents.

Thirdly, The next Advantage which
Haman enjoy'd, was his *Power*: And
 how great this was, may in some Mea-
 sure be taken from the Largeness of his
 Commission over all the Provinces. For
 the King repos'd the greatest Confidence
 in his Abilities and Fidelity, and en-
 trusted him with the sole Management
 and Transaction of his Affairs. For he
 Est. iii. 10, took the Ring from his own Finger, and
 11. gave it unto *Haman*; and said unto him,
The Silver is given unto thee, the People also,
so do with them, as it seemeth good to thee.

The like ample Commission, with some
 of the same Ceremonies of Respect, we
 find

find given to Joseph by the King of Egypt; which Commission, it may not be amiss to recite at large, for the better Discovery of Haman's Power.

Pharoah said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the Land of Egypt: And Pharoah took off his Ring from his Hand, and put it upon Joseph's Hand, and arrayed him in Vestures of fine Linnen, and put a gold Chain about his Neck. And he made him to ride in the second Chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the Knee: And he made him Ruler over all the Land of Egypt. And Pharoah said unto Joseph, I am Pharoah, and without thee shall no Man lift up his Hand, or Foot, in all the Land of Egypt.

Sermon XVI.
Gen. xli.
41, 42, 43,
44.

From both these Places compar'd together, we find that giving the Ring from the Finger was the Sign of delegating the highest Power to any favourite Minister: For by this Means, he had Custody of the Royal Seal, and Authority of Writing and commanding what he pleas'd, in his Master's Name. Of this Power, Haman made an extravagant Use, when the King's Scribes were called, on the thirteenth Day of the first Month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded, unto the King's Lieutenants, and to the Governors that were over every Province, and to the Ruler of every People of every Province; in the Name of King Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the King's Ring. And the Letters were sent by Posts into all the King's Provinces, to destroy,

Est. iii 12,
13.

Sermon stroy, to kill, and to cause to perish all
 XVI. *Jews, both young and old, little Children*
 ~~~~~ *and Women, in one Day, and to take the*  
*Spoil of them for a Prey.*

This Decree was not more remarkable for its Cruelty, than for that Excess of Power which it suppos'd *Haman* invested with. The Condescension was so great on the Side of the Monarch, and the Power so unlimited to a Subject, that I cannot see, what *Haman* could desire more from his Master, except the *Queen* from his Bosom, or the *Crown* from his Head. Nay, as to the *Crown*, he seem'd to have engross'd all the Prerogatives of *That* to himself, and *Abasuerus* had only the Name and Title, and *Haman* the Respect and Power of a King. And then, as to the *Queen*, if the Project of extirpating the *Jews* had taken Effect, she must have been involved in the common Fate, and unavoidably have perish'd with her People.

So subtle was the Policy of this Man, to strike at Majesty by arraigning the Subject, and through the Sides of *Mordecai*, to stab *Esther* to the Heart! — But

*Fourthly*, Another Advantage that *Haman* enjoy'd, was his *Riches*.

Interest has a general Influence upon human Actions, and is the powerful Motive both of our Hopes and Fears. From the *Peasant* to the *Statesman*, we find little else but Schemes and Contrivances for Riches and Greatness, and the most vigorous Sallies and Efforts for the Advancement



vancement of themselves and their Families. Sermon  
XVI.

And indeed, without a competent Degree of Wealth, all outward Enjoyments, and internal Qualifications; all the Gifts of Fortune, and the Endowments of Nature, will signify but little to a Man who affects Greatness and Popularity. 'Tis Wealth which stamps Beauty upon Deformity, and Learning upon Ignorance; which procures Friends, and reconciles Enemies; which humbles our Inferiors, and pacifies our Rulers; which commands Respect from our Equals, and Adoration from our Dependents.

Now *Haman*, by his own Confession, Est. v. 11. had enough of this powerful and commanding Thing, call'd *Wealth*, to have made him easy and happy, if his own Envy and Discontent had not render'd him miserable. The outward Possessions were great and magnificent, and all the Qualifications of an earthly Happiness were at Hand. Nature and Providence seem'd to contend for his Advancement, and both Prince and Court to idolize his Politics: Yet there was still an Obstacle and Impediment from *within*, and his own Mind had laid some Scruples and Difficulties in the Way to Happiness.

*Fifthly*, The last, and most considerable Blessing that *Haman* enjoy'd, was his *Children*. He had not only a large Fortune, but a promising Family; Plenty of all worldly Blessings, and a numerous Issue to succeed him in the Enjoyment of

Sermon of them : And by this Means, the Happiness was not likely to terminate in himself ; but *Honour* and *Estate* were in a fair Probability of descending to Posterity. Some People have no Prospect but the present, and can look no farther than their own Lives. *In the next Generation, their Name may be blotted out, and like dead Men, they may be clean forgotten.* Though they may purchase Renown by their Prowess and Learning, and raise Estates by their Labour and Industry ; yet what do all their Achievements and Acquisitions signify, when they have no Body to succeed in their Labours, no Body to inherit their Titles of Honour ?

It is certain that the Propagation of our Species is essential to our Being, and the Increase of a Family is the constant Wish of Mankind. The Denial of an Issue has been thought the Curse of the Almighty, *and write ye this Man childless* was the finishing Stroke to *Jeboiakim's* Calamity. That Exprobation of *Rachel* to *Jacob*, *Give me Children, or else I die*, seems, in some qualified Sense, to be the Voice of Nature, and the united Request of all the World. For the Hope of a Family encourages our Industry, and whets our Expectations ; sweetens our Labours, and softens our Cares ; mitigates our Pains, and triumphs over our Difficulties.

*Haman*, who gloried in the Multitude of his Children, had, without Doubt, a sufficient Experience of all the Blessings which

*The Discontented Statesman.*

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Sermon  
XVI.

which attend a numerous and hopeful Family: And yet so little was the Temper of this great Man, so predominant his Malice, and so craving his Ambition, that he took no Delight in his Children, nor reap'd any Satisfaction from his Fortune, as long as he saw *Mordecai the Jew sitting in the King's Gate.*

Lord, Grant that we may take Warning and Example by this and such like ambitious and aspiring Spirits, and may so moderate our Desires and Affections after the Pleasures and Enjoyments of this World, that we may learn Contentment in every Station of Life; and by a true Faith and Affiance in God's Mercy, may so pass thro' Things temporal, that we finally lose not the Things eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

X SERMON



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# SERMON XVII.

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ESTH. v. 13.

*Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's Gate.*

Sermon  
XVII.

**T**HE Book of *Esther* affords some of the most remarkable Transactions in *Holy Writ*, and is one of the most delightful and instructive Pieces of History that ever was transmitted to Posterity by any inspir'd Author. We may there see Faithfulness and Loyalty rewarded in the Person of *Mordecai*; Pride and Ambition punished in the Example of *Haman*; Beauty and Innocence crowned in the Promotion of *Esther*.

The several surprizing Turns in this Affair, and the wonderful Plots and Counter-minings of Statesmen can never be more seasonably exposed to your Eyes, than in a tricking and a politic Age, and in the midst of a Generation of Men so enflamed with Ambition, and addicted to Cruelty. And forasmuch as

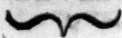
Haman acts the greatest Part in this Nar- Sermon  
rative, and is a Person the most ador'd XVII.  
in his Glory, and trampled upon in Dis-  
grace; I thought it not improper to take  
the Proportion of this great Man in his  
several Postures, and to present him to  
your Thoughts in different Views: We  
find him in the Text loaded with Ho-  
nours, and yet uneasy under the Burden;  
envious and aspiring, rich and complain-  
ing at the same Time: He brow-beats  
his Equals, and spurns at his Inferiors;  
hectors the *Lords*, and tramples upon the  
*Commons*; engrosses the most profitable  
Preferments of the Court to himself, and  
yet pronounces all his Acquisitions vain  
and unprofitable.— *All this availeth me  
nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew  
sitting at the King's Gate.*

From these Words, I offer'd, in my  
last Discourse, these *Five* following Things  
to your Consideration.

FIRST, An Enquiry into those Pos-  
sessions and Enjoyments which Ha-  
man declar'd, *availed him Nothing.*

SECONDLY, Some Remarks up-  
on that ambitious and envious Tem-  
per of his, which render'd him mi-  
serable under such prosperous and  
advantagious Circumstances.

THIRDLY, The true Ground  
and Foundation of his Resentment  
against *Mordecai the Jew.*



FOURTHLY, The ill Consequences of this Resentment both in Respect of *himself* and his *Family*.

FIFTHLY, Some general Observations from this Matter of Fact, for the Conduct and Management of human Life.

Having already finished my Enquiry into those Possessions and Enjoyments which *Haman* declar'd, *availed him Nothing*; I shall now proceed in the

SECOND Place, To make some Remarks upon that ambitious and envious Temper of his, which render'd him miserable under such prosperous and advantageous Circumstances.

And here I cannot but observe to you,

*First*, That *Haman*, upon the Account of his wonderful and extraordinary Rise, had no Reason to complain, or be uneasy in his present Circumstances.

*Secondly*, That his Complaint must be very unseasonable and ridiculous, at a Time when he was in actual Possession of Plenty, and apprehensive of no Disgrace at Court, or Removal from his Office.

*Thirdly*, That it was founded upon a false Principle, and proceeded from a wrong Notion of Things.

*First*,



First, If *Haman* had duly weigh'd his extraordinary *Rise* at Court, he could al-  
ledge no Manner of Pretence for Uneasiness or Complaint under his present Condition. For, however the Case might stand in relation to his Pedigree in his own Country; yet his Promotion was sudden and unexpected for a Stranger, and the Post which he was advanc'd to, was the most considerable in the *Persian Empire*. If, therefore, he could but have taken the Pains to compare the various Postures of his Fortune, and impartially have viewed the critical and surprizing Turns of his Advancement, the Reflection upon his past Circumstances might render his present Condition more easy and delightful. The Height of Grandeur is never so rapturous and amusing, as to Men who rise from a low Estate: Like a Prospect from an Hill to Persons who have always lived in Flats and Valleys, it fills the Eye with Astonishment, and the Heart with Delight; transports the Passions, and almost surpasses our Belief. If we were perpetually accustom'd to a Calm, we should be hardly sensible of the Advantage of it; but when the Winds begin to bluster, and the Waves to roar, we presently reflect upon the Conveniences of a different Sort of Weather. A constant and uninterrupted Course of Prosperity may be apt to stupify and enervate the Minds of Men; but a Transition from a *Worse*, to a *Better* Turn of Fortune, will make them more sensible and apprehensive of

Sermon  
XVII.

Sermon their Happiness; and seems like a pleasant Haven to a wearisome Passenger, after all the Turmoils and Fatigues of a dangerous Voyage.

XVII.

Since, therefore, it was *Haman's* Fortune to be rais'd from a mean Beginning, in that unaccountable Manner which has been before describ'd; and since he had this particular Addition to his Happiness, that he knew once what it was to want it; he was the more inexcusable in his Complaints, and the more fit to be expos'd for his Uneasiness. The Novelty of the Blessing should have enhanc'd the Value of it, and the Height of his Station have plac'd him above the Disorder of a trifling Resentment.

Secondly, The Complaint of *Haman* must be very unseasonable and ridiculous, if we consider the *Time* when it was made; namely, when he was in actual Possession of Plenty, and apprehensive of no Disgrace at Court, or Removal from his Office.

*Haman* was so far from suspecting the Loss of his present Preferments, that his exorbitant Temper had heighten'd his Expectations, and his Soul was eager in the Pursuit of fresh Favours. For when the King ask'd him, *What should be done to the Man that he delighted to honour?* He presently propos'd the *Crown* to be put upon his Head, and the *Royal Apparel* upon his Back; to have him ride in Triumph on the King's Horse thro' every Street of the City, and Proclamation to be made to all the

Est. vi. 6.

2. 8. 9.

the

the People of his Majesty's Favour and Respect towards him: And this *Haman* did, in Confidence of his own Interest at Court, and upon Presumption that his Master's Affections were solely plac'd upon himself.

From hence we may gather, that *Haman* being in Pursuit of higher Preferments, could not have any present Dislike to the Honours and Glories of the Court, and by Consequence, his Complaint must be far more ridiculous, than if he had accidentally fallen into Disgrace after the plentiful Enjoyment of so many Blessings. For the Loss of Happiness is an Aggravation to Misery, and the Thoughts of what we *once were*, is a cutting Memento to what *we now are*. Had *Haman* a Mind to have complain'd, he should have first shewn where he was grieved, and, by some solid Reasons against temporal Enjoyments, have engag'd the Auditors in his Favours; but to rant out of Humour, and repine in the midst of Plenty, was enough to raise the Indignation, rather than move the Bowels of Mankind. How strange is it, for a Man *cloath'd in Purple and fine Linnen*, to make a Noise about the Meanness of his Rayment, and the Severity of his Fate? How odd is it for him, who *fares sumptuously every Day*, and is swallow'd up in a Bed of Down at Night, to lament the Hardness of his Lodgings, and the Coarseness of his Diet? How ridiculous for him, *who drinks Wine in*



Sermon  
XVII.

*Bowls*, and has all the Treasures of the *East* in Possession, to counterfeit Poverty, and fancy his Soul within the very Clutches of Famine? If Men will be restless and uneasy, they must shew some probable Reason for their Discontent, and not continue fretting and fuming, and yet, at the same Time, grasping at an higher Degree of those very Things, which they make such hideous Out-cries against.

If *Haman* had cast an Eye upon the Princes of the Empire, he might have found Natives enough of Birth and Distinction, who were obliged to truckle to his Power; and if these had thought their Submission to be hard Usage, and had regretted the Advancement of one Man above all the ancient Nobility, there might have been some Pity owing to their Complaint, some Redress due to their Grievances: But when all the *Nobles fell down before Haman*, and *People of all Nations and Languages did him Service*, who could suppose that any Uneasiness could harbour in his Breast, or that any Storms of Malice and Revenge should ruffle and discompose his Soul?

*Thirdly*, The last Thing which I have to object against *Haman*, is, that his Complaint was founded upon a false Principle, and proceeded from a wrong Notion of his Duty.

No Man of Experience can deny, but that earthly Enjoyments are in themselves very transitory and imperfect, empty and unsatisfactory; and no Ways answerable to

to our Desires, or commensurate to the Faculties of a rational Soul : But *Haman* (as appears from what has been said upon our last Particular,) had not religiously consider'd these Points, and could have no Quarrel with the World upon any of these Accounts. He was so far from thinking his Possessions *superfluous*, that he complain'd of them as *defective*, and suppos'd himself rather streightned by *Want*, than surfeited with an *Excess* of Enjoyment. Had *Haman* really discover'd the Vanities of a Court, the Fickleness of Fortune, and the Follies of Greatness; and out of a generous Contempt of this World, pronounc'd all Things belonging to them fallacious and trifling; he had acted the Part of a *Philosopher*, and might have been reputed one of the wisest Men of Antiquity. Had he confin'd his Desires, and curb'd his Appetites, when he saw the Object was not agreeable, nor the Enjoyment satisfactory; his Practice had been regular, and his Example worthy of our Imitation. But for a *Man of Honour* to fret, because he could not crush an inconsiderable *Captive*; for a great and swelling Courtier to fall foul upon the Hardness of his Fate, because his Station could not command the *Knee*, or bow down the *Head* of an Inferior, argued a Poorness of Spirit as well as a Defect of Judgment.

THIRDLY, I am to search out the true Ground and Foundation of *Haman's*

Sermon *man's Fury and Resentment against Mor-*  
 XVII. *decai the Jew :* And this is what we are  
 directed to, from the *second* and *fifth* Ver-  
 ses of the *third* Chapter of *Esther*, where  
 we read that all the *King's Servants that*  
*were in the King's Gate bowed, and reverenc-*  
*ed Haman ; for the King had so commanded*  
*concerning him : But Mordecai bowed not,*  
*nor did him Reverence : And when Haman*  
*saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him*  
*Reverence, then was Haman full of*  
*Wrath.*

The Reverence here insisted upon, is  
 generally thought by Expositors to be  
 denied by *Mordecai*, because it look'd too  
 much like *Adoration*, and seem'd to bor-  
 der too nearly upon *Idolatry* : And this  
 Notion of *theirs* is expressly confirmed  
 by the *Apocryphal* Writer of the latter  
 Part of the *Book of Esther*, who intro-  
 duces *Mordecai*, in his Prayer to God,  
 excusing his Conduct, and explaining the  
 Reasons of his Behaviour in the follow-  
 ing Method ; *Thou knowest, Lord, that it*  
*was neither in Contempt, nor Pride, nor for*  
*any Desire of Glory, that I did not bow*  
*down to proud Haman. For I could have*  
*been content with good Will for the Salva-*  
*tion of Israel, to kiss the Soles of his Feet.*  
*But I did this that I might not prefer the*  
*Glory of Man above the Glory of God :*  
*Neither will I worship any but thee, O God,*  
*neither will I do it in Pride.*

Est. xiii. 12,  
 13, 14

But the learned Dr. \* *Prideaux* is of  
 Opinion, that this Conjecture is frivo-

\* *Prideaux's Connection, Part 1st. Book V.*



lous, and the Reasons which should support it, invalid, "Because the Obeisance and Prostration here mention'd, was the common Compliment, which was constantly paid to the Kings of *Persia* by all that were admitted into their Presence, and was no doubt paid to this very King by *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, when they had Access to him, and after also by *Mordecai* himself. For otherwise, he could not have obtained that Admission into his Presence, and that Advancement in his Palace, which was afterwards there granted unto him. And if it were not idolatrous to pay this Adoration to the King, neither could it be idolatrous to pay it to *Haman*.

Wherefore, this accurate Historian thinks it most probable, "That *Mordecai's* refusing to pay him this Reverence, was from a Cause that was *personal* in *Haman* only. Perchance it was, because *Haman* being of the Race of the *Amalekites*, *Mordecai* look'd on him as under the Curse, which God had denounced against that Nation, and therefore thought himself obliged not to give such Honour unto him." Or else 'tis likely the Refusal might proceed from a secret Impulse and Direction of God, out of a Design to fret this haughty Courtier, and bring about some great Alterations and Changes in the *Empire*.

But let the Cause of the Action be what it would, it is plain that it was represented as the highest Disrespect and Incivility

Exod. xvi.

14. 1 Sam. ii. 3.

Sermon vility by *Haman*, or else it could not have  
 XVII. put his Blood into a Ferment, and kept  
 his Soul so long upon the Rack; it could  
 not have four'd all the former Ingredients  
 of Happiness, and forc'd him upon the  
 most dangerous Expedients for a Deli-  
 verance.

If we would survey this suppos'd Crime  
 in all its heightning Circumstances and  
 seeming Aggravations, we must consider  
 it in these three Respects.

*First*, As it was an Affront to that Ho-  
 nour which the King had lately con-  
 ferr'd upon *Haman*.

*Secondly*, As this Affront was offer'd by  
 a mean and inconsiderable Man.

*Thirdly*, As it afforded an ill President  
 for others to copy after, inasmuch  
 as it lessen'd the Authority, and un-  
 dervalued the Greatness of this  
 haughty Courtier.

*First*, Then *Haman* might resent *Mor-  
 decai's* Disrespect to him, because it was  
 an Affront to that Honour which the  
 King had lately conferr'd upon him.

The *Eastern* Monarchs claim'd a Right  
 to Adoration, and insisted upon the Ho-  
 mage of all their Dominions, as an inhe-  
 rent Tribute due to their Sovereignty:  
 And it is no Wonder then, if those who  
 were Attendants on the Throne, should  
 be willing to be petty Gods as well as  
 their Masters, and to suppose some Rays  
 of the Divinity shed upon their Heads,  
 and

and uncommon Civilities due to their Sermon  
Persons and Stations. Courtiers, in all XVII.  
Countries and Ages, have set up for  
something more than Men, and have lost  
their Tempers as they have chang'd their  
Places. The Greatness of their Power,  
and the Prevalency of their Interest, hath  
been apt to flatter them into an Opinion  
of their own Excellencies, and to per-  
suade them that there was something di-  
vine in their Persons. Their Conversa-  
tion at Court has blown up their Vanity  
and Ambition, and their Intimacy with  
their Prince made them think of Nothing  
but Distance and Respect from their Fel-  
low-Subjects.

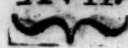
For *Mordecai*, therefore, 'to be defe-  
ctive in his Civilities to *Haman* might ea-  
sily be misrepresented to his Superiors,  
and soon aggravated into an enormous  
Crime. Art and Malice might descant  
handsomely upon the pretended Obstina-  
cy of the Offender, and make the Want  
of a Compliment to a Servant, a direct  
Affront to the Authority of his Master.  
The next Step would be to blacken his  
Person, and prejudice the King against  
him: And then how easily might Syco-  
phants and Flatterers interpret his Beha-  
viour, a Defiance to the State, and an  
undermining the Prerogative; a Flying  
in the Face of Majesty itself, and a con-  
tradicting the Decrees of the *Persian*  
Monarch.

*Secondly*, Another Provocation of *Ha-*  
*man's* Resentment was the Meanness of  
the



Sermon the Person who offer'd him the Affront.

XVII. For *Mordecai* was but a poor captive

 Jew, and a Porter at the Royal Palace ;

and by Consequence could not have very much Interest in an Enemy's Country.

He himself was so sensible of this, that when *Esther* had gain'd upon the Affec-

*Est.* ii. 20.

tions of *Ahasuerus*, he charged *her* not to discover her Kindred and People, lest the Meanness of her Extraction, and the Captivity of her Brethren, should prejudice her Amours with the King, and hinder her intended Promotion to his Bed.

This I mention to shew, That *Haman* might have thought himself secure of more than common Respect from *Mordecai*, upon the Account of the Lowness of his present Circumstances. For Poverty generally renders Men cringing and mercenary ; and Slavery debases the Spirits, and crows the Courage of the most brave and heroic Part of Mankind. Captives are entirely at the Mercy of their Conquerors, and must accept of any Terms which Pride will impose upon them. The Hardness of their Circumstances puts it out of their Power to stand upon Punctilioes, and Necessity compels them to be rather over-fawning and complementary, than stiff and untractable to their Superiors.

But *Mordecai* had a better Spirit than Men generally have in his Condition, and entertain'd an higher Notion of Honour than might be consistent with his

his present Slavery. This must necessarily grate upon the ambitious Temper, and fire the Indignation of his profess'd Enemy. For what Reason had he to be so cautious and singular? What Authority for his unseasonable Stiffness, when his Betters were all over Complaisance and Civility? Great Men (we see) can illy brook Contempt upon any Occasion, and 'tis with no small Difficulty that they pass by a Disrespect from a *Friend* or an *Equal*: But an Affront from a *Slave*, is an accumulated Offence, and adds Pride to Disobedience, and Contempt to Rebellion. Had one of the Princes of the Empire been defective in his Compliments to this great Courtier, he might, perhaps, have made his Peace by an Acknowledgment of his Fault, and a Surrender of his Person; but for an abject Slave to contradict the *First Minister of State*, was an Offence against the *Laws of the Medes and Persians*, and a Crime never to be expiated but with the Blood of the Offender.

*Thirdly*, The last Reason of *Haman's* Resentment against *Mordecai* proceeded from his own Fears and Suspicions, that a Piece of Disrespect from one Man might be an ill President for others to copy after; inasmuch as it tended to a Diminution of his Authority, and the undervaluing of his Greatness in the Eyes of the People.

*Haman*, without Doubt, like other new-raisd Ministers, must have a great many

Sermon many Rivals and Enemies. His Pomp  
 XVII. must be look'd upon with an evil Eye,  
 and his Station envied by his Fellow-  
 Courtiers. Others might be apt to think  
 themselves as capable of Business, and  
 as well qualified for the Royal Favour  
 as himself: And then certainly they  
 would watch his Motions, expose his  
 Male-Administration, and catch at every  
 Opportunity to disgrace him.

It seem'd then to be *Haman's* Business  
 to rivet an awful Sense of his Power in  
 the Minds of his Inferiors, and to govern  
 by Fear when he could not by Love.  
 For should a Breach have been once  
 made upon his Honour, every Trifle  
 would have widened and disturbed it.  
*Mordecai's* Disrespect was a leading Card  
 to greater Incivilities, and pav'd the Way  
 to universal Contempt: And unless this  
 inconsiderable Captive could be crush'd  
 and humbled, more powerful Enemies  
 would soon arise, and abet the Quarrel.

FOURTHLY, I am to enquire in-  
 to the ill Consequences of *Haman's* Re-  
 sentment, both in Respect of *himself* and  
 his *Family*.—Which will appear

*First*, From the Displeasure of the  
 Queen.

*Secondly*, From the Advancement of  
 his Rival.

*Thirdly*, From his own Disgrace and  
 Ruin.

*Fourthly*,



*The Discontented Statesman.*

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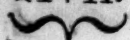
Fourthly, From the Fate of his Family and Confederates.

Sermon  
XVII.

First, *Haman's* Fury and Resentment against *Mordecai* provok'd the Displeasure of the *Queen*, and made her a Party in the Quarrel. For since *Haman*, out of Revenge, had contriv'd the Ruin of the whole *Jewish* Nation, and procur'd a Decree for their Extirpation; it was high Time for *Esther* to address herself to King *Ahasuerus*, in this pathetic Manner: *If I have found Favour in thy Sight, O King, let my Life be given me at my Petition, and my People at my Request. For we are sold, I and my People, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish: But if we had been sold for Bond-men, and Bond-women, I had held my Tongue, although the Enemy could not countervail the King's Damage.* Esth. vii. 31

What an hellish Contrivance is here brought to Light, and what a complicated Scene of Villanies is presented to our View! What Ear could be deaf to such Complaints? What Heart be Proof against such moving Oratory? We cannot suppose but these melting Supplications of a virtuous Queen, must raise the greatest Tumults and Disorders in the Breast of an indulgent Husband. The *Lion* would be rows'd, and the *Dove* begin to lament. Majesty and Love would engage for the Rescue of distress'd Innocence, and all the Powers in the Empire be summoned to crush the Villain, who  
Y durst

Sermon *durst presume in his Heart to do this cursed*  
 XVII. *Thing.*



And now what a Storm has *Haman* brought about his Ears, and what a terrible Adversary must he expect to meet with, in an enrag'd Queen? The Difficulty might not be great to trample down an Equal or an Inferior; but the Case was alter'd, when his Malice was level'd against a *Person* whose Beauty had advanc'd her to the Bed of a King, and whose Piety intitled her to a better Crown; a *Person*, who lay in the Bosom, and had taken Possession of the Heart of her Lord, and had the Royal Promise of *any Thing she should request or petition for, even to the half of his Kingdom.* How must all the refin'd Arts of Policy be baffled, when they came to grapple with this female Favourite? How fruitless must be the Struggles, and how feeble the Attempts of Statesmen, when they would stand in Competition with the Charms of Beauty, and the Endearments of Love?

*Esth. v. 6.*

*Secondly*, Another Mortification to *Haman* was, the Advancement of his Rival: And to aggravate the Matter, and render the Thing more disagreeable and shocking to a Person of his haughty Temper, he received the Orders himself from the King's own Mouth, to put the other into Possession of his new Honours, and to make *Proclamation* of his Majesty's Favour and Generosity towards him. Had *Haman* been displaced, and a third Man  
 advanc'd

advanc'd in his Room; or should *Mordecai* have been so happy to succeed him, and another Person been employ'd to notify the Royal Pleasure, and bring Tidings of his Promotion, it might have been some Mitigation of his Loss, and made the Disappointment fit more easy upon his Mind. But alas! *Haman* was the unhappy Messenger of his own Disgrace, and the Person pick'd out to complement *Mordecai* upon his Advancement.

*Thirdly*, All the Evils threatned to the *Jews* were prevented, by the speedy Execution of *Haman*. For he was not suffer'd to escape with the bare Loss of his Honours, but was forc'd to part with his Life into the Bargain. The Destruction invented for the Innocent, lighted with greater Fury upon *his own Pate*, and the Gallows of fifty Cubits high prepar'd for *Mordecai*, was the unfortunate Place of his own Execution.

Esth. vii. 9.

*Fourthly*, The last ill Consequence of *Haman's* Resentment, was the Destruction it brought upon his Family and Adherents.

It is almost incredible to relate, what prodigious Numbers of their Enemies, the *Jews* slew, in the Provinces of *Persia* and *Media*, when they were once authoriz'd by the Government, and had the Royal Licence to destroy: But what was most remarkable, and what compleated the Tragedy, was the Execution of *Haman's ten Sons* upon the same Gallows with their Father.

c. ix. v. 25.



Sermon  
XVII.

We had Occasion to remark in our former Discourse, that *Haman* gloried in the *Multitude of his Children*, and had ('tis probable) a sufficient Experience of all the Blessings which attend a numerous and hopeful Issue. And as his Happiness was great in the Life of his Family, so his Misery must be proportionably augmented by the unfortunate Death of them. Had the Disgrace been single, and the Misfortune only affected his own Person, he might have received some Comfort under his Afflictions, from the Prospect of a rising and flourishing Generation: But that his whole *Household* should be taken off with one Blow, and his Name made to *stink* and *perish* in his native Country, was such an unparalel'd Aggravation of Misery as must heighten the Terrors of his Execution, and even double the Pangs of Death upon his Soul.—

I have now finish'd that Part of my Text which I thought proper to allot for this Discourse; and I shall trespass no longer upon your Patience, than whilst I make two short Inferences from what has been said.

*First*, From the History of *Haman* and *Mordecai*, and the surprizing Events which attended the Transaction; we may learn to admire the Wisdom of Providence, which, in all State-Revolutions, aims at some steady End, and from the Justlings and Contentions of second Causes,

ses, brings about some unexpected Good to God's Church and People.

Sermon  
XVII.

Men may propose what Schemes they please; form Parties, and enter into Cabals; lay Plots, and manage Intrigues; yet *God who sitteth on high*, sees all their secret Steps and Movements, and in the *twinkling of an Eye* countermines their Stratagems, and defeats their Enterprizes. Alas! It is not the Abilities of a *Ministry*, or the Strength of an Army; it is not the Might of a *Pharoah*, or the Blasphemy of a *Rabsakeh*; the Malice of an *Haman*, or the Policy of an *Ahitophel*, which can effect any Thing against that wise and omnipotent Being, *who disappointeth the Devices of the Crafty, and taketh the Wise in their own Net; who frustrateth the Tokens of Liars, and maketh the Statesman either Blind or Mad.* To shew the Insufficiency of human Policy, and to prove the *Wisdom* of this *World*, *Foolishness* in respect of *God*; he oftentimes denies Success to the most probable Means, and casts the Balance to the lighter Side. When intriguing Men wade out of their Depth, and would act independently of a superior Power, Ignorance and Infatuation generally seize their Intellects, and Crosses and Disappointments are the Fruits of their Labour: They grow maz'd in their Projects, and bewilder'd in their Actions; *meet with Darknes in the Day-time, and grope in the Noon-day as in the Night.*

Job v. 12.

v. 14

Sermon

XVII.

*Secondly, We are to extol the Courage of Mordecai for appearing at this critical Juncture, and so strenuously asserting the Interest of his Country and Religion, when such terrible Designs were on foot for the Ruin and Subversion of Both. He was the Instrument employ'd by Providence for the Preservation of the Jews, the happy Person who opened the Eyes of the Government, and introduc'd a new Scene of Affairs. He was the Man who baffled this ruling Favourite, who displac'd him from his Office, and introduc'd another Sett of Ministers. Had he been Master of no more Courage than some of his Brethren, nothing but Ruin and Desolation could have ensued: Had he flatter'd the Powers in Being, and submitted to the Usurpation of his Enemiies; had he truckled to the Foot-stool of Haman, and meanly lick'd the Dust before him; how would the Daughter of Sion have been cover'd with a Cloud, and the Beauty of Israel cast down to the Ground?*

Lam. ii. 1.

*This may be Encouragement to us to be zealously affected in every good Thing; to stand to our Principles with Cheerfulness and Courage, and own the Doctrines of our Church in the most perilous Times. If thine Enemies deliver thee up to Councils, and bring thee before Rulers and Kings for the Sake of Christ and his Gospel; fear not Son of Man, neither be cast down: Tho' Briars and Thorns be with thee, and thou dwellest amongst Vipers and Scorpions; be not afraid of the Words of the Mighty, nor dismay'd*

Gal. iv. 18.

Mar. xiii. 9.

Ezek. ii. 6.



dismayed at the Looks of the Proud. Sermon  
Wicked Men act but by a limited Com- XVII.  
mission in this World, and in Spite of all  
their Rancour and Malice, Success will  
some time or other crown virtuous Ac-  
tions. Though we should not all of us  
be so happy as to have *Mordecai's* good  
Fortune upon Earth, nor be so successful  
as to rise upon the Necks of our Ene-  
mies; yet the same worthy Proceedings  
will secure the Peace of Conscience, and  
the Favour of God; the same Courage  
and Sincerity will be applauded by all  
Lovers of Virtue here, and recommend  
us to a greater *Recompence of Reward*  
hereafter. Amen.

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# SERMON XVIII.

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ESTH. v. 13.

*Yet all this availeth me Nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's Gate.*

Sermon  
XVIII.

**T**HESE Words were spoken by *Haman* in the Height of his Glory, and are a memorable Instance both of his Ambition and Discontent; an indelible Blot upon his Memory and Actions, and a fatal Warning to all those who shall tread in his Steps.

The several Passages of this Story are so useful and instructive to Mankind, that I thought it proper to lay as much of it before your Eyes, as seem'd necessary for the Illustration of the Text: And here for my own *Ease*, as well as your better *Edification*, I rang'd my Discourse under *Five Heads*, and propos'd to proceed after the following Method.

FIRST,

FIRST, By enquiring into those Possessions and Enjoyments, which *Haman* declared, *Availed him Nothing.*

SECONDLY, By making some Remarks and Reflections upon the Dissatisfaction and Uneasiness of that ambitious and envious Temper of his, which render'd him miserable, under such prosperous and advantageous Circumstances.

THIRDLY, By pointing out the true Ground of his Fury and Resentment against *Mordecai the Jew.*

FOURTHLY, By shewing the ill Consequences of this Resentment, both in Respect of *Himself* and his *Family.*

FIFTHLY, By making some general Observations from this Matter of Fact for the Conduct and Management of human Life.

I have already run through *Four* of these Particulars, and have only the *Fifth* to trouble you with at present.

By what I have formerly represented, I hope it sufficiently appears, how astonishing this Declaration of *Haman* was, and how fruitless all his Attempts to ruin *Mordecai* and the *Jewish* Nation prov'd



Sermon prov'd in the End. You have seen the  
 XVIII. Unreasonableness of his Complaint specified in several Instances, and the Deplo-  
 ~~~~~ rable-ness of his Fate exemplified in the utter Destruction of *Himself* and his *Family*. And since *these Things are written for our Admonition*, and the Holy Ghost has transmitted this excellent History to Posterity, to mortify the Pride and Ambition of discontented Men; I hope you will judge it expedient, that I should, in the

FIFTH and last Place, raise some general Observations from this Matter of Faith for the Conduct and Management of human Life,

First, This Declaration of *Haman*, concerning the Emptiness and Insufficiency of his present Enjoyments, shews us, That all *outward Goods* signify Nothing to the Completion of our Happiness, without the *inward* Peace and Contentment of the *Mind*.

Secondly, That there is a Meanness of Temper in ambitious Men; which discovers itself in the Injustice of their Proceedings towards their Inferiors.

Thirdly, That it is oftentimes in the Power of very little and inconsiderable Things to fret and disturb an aspiring Person.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That Discontent in *Ministers* Sermon occasions them to give bad Counsel XVIII. to their Masters, and to do ill Offices to their *Fellow-Subjects*.

Fifthly, That Almighty Providence oftentimes raises up great Men to make them shew their Discontent in their Stations, and so the more effectually to prepare them for their own Ruin.

My *First* Observation from the Text, is, That an Affluence of external Blessings is not sufficient to compleat our Happiness, without the inward Peace and Contentment of the Mind.

The Proof of this Observation, as far as relates to the Example of *Haman* here before us, will lie chiefly in the Discussion of these *Four* Things.

First, The Insufficiency of Riches.

Secondly, The Vanity of Greatness.

Thirdly, The Prevalence of Envy.

Fourthly, The Necessity of Contentment.

First, *Haman's* Declaration suggests to us the Insufficiency of Riches.

Although the Generality of Mankind confine their Wishes to earthly Blessings, and think that Happiness takes her Residence upon the *Thrones* of *Princes*, or in the *Palaces* of *Nobles*; yet a little Experience over-throws all this vain Speculation, and a small Acquaintance with the Af-

Sermon XVIII. Affairs of the World will expose the Vanity of human Desires. Men may be carried away by a false Light, and captivated with a glittering Superficies of Things; but when once the Curtain is drawn up, and Nature appears in her proper Colours, they will find Cause enough to repent of their hasty Judgment, and to recal their former Wishes and Desires. *

If Happiness consisted in any outward Possessions, then he that had the greatest Share of the Gifts of Fortune, would have the best Claim to be happy; but we see, on the contrary, that some Men, who have *eat the Bread of Carefulness* all their Days, and raised great Estates by the Subtilty of their Heads, or the *Sweat of their Brows*, have yet been poor in the midst of Abundance, and received no Satisfaction from the Largeness of their Possessions. *Avaritia semper infinita, semper insatiabilis; neque copia, neque inopia minuitur. Covetousness enlargeth her De-*

* Quibus argenti & auri maximum pondus, & pecuniarum ingentium vel extracti aggeres, vel defossæ strues; hos etiam inter divitias suas trepidos, cogitationis incertæ sollicitudo discruciat, ne prædo vaster, ne percussor infestet, ne inimica cujusque locupletioris invidia calumniosis litibus inquietet. Non cibus securo, somnusve contingit. Suspirat ille in convivio, bibat licet gemma; & cum epulis marcidum corpus torus mollior alto sinu condiderit, vigilat tamen in pluma: nec intelligit miser speciosa sibi esse supplicia, auro se alligatum teneri, & possideri magis quam possidere divitias atque opes. O detestabilis cæcitas mentium, & cupiditatis insanæ profunda caligo! Cum exonerare se possit & levare ponderibus, pergit magis fortunæ argentibus incubare, pergit pœnalibus cumulibus pertinaciter adhærere. S. Cyprian ad Donat.

fires as Hell, and can no sooner be fill'd Sermon
than the Bottomless Pit. Like the two XVIII.
Daughters of the Horseleach, she cries,
Give, Give; and yet all the Gifts of For- Prov. xxx.
tune and Additions of Plenty, contribute 15.
no more to the extinguishing of her
Thirst, than a Drop of a Bucket to the
Swelling of the Ocean. There is an Evil,
(says the Royal Preacher) which I have
seen under the Sun, and it is common a- Eccles. vi.
mong Men: A Man, to whom God hath 1, 2.
given Riches, Wealth, and Honour, so that
he wanteth nothing for his Soul of all that
he desireth; yet God giveth him not Power
to eat thereof, nor a Mind to be content-
ed therewith.

I do indeed acknowledge that when covetous Men begin to lay Schemes for their own Advancement, they may fix and limit their Desires to some particular Things; but when they come to the Possession of those Things, the same Principles which render'd them uneasy in their former Stations, will still push on their Ambition, and drive their Avarice farther.

* *Sic festinanti semper locupletior obstat.*

Rich Men always find some Dissatisfaction with what is *present*, and think to mend it by the Addition of something *absent*. One Possession lays a Foundation for another Desire; and when that is gratified, a *Third* and a *Fourth* put

* Horat. Sat. i.

Sermon in their Pretensions: And so we go on
 XVIII. Possessing and Desiring, Grasping and Re-
 pinning, to the End of our Lives. For,
 as the *Eye* is not content with *seeing*, nor
 the *Ear* with *hearing*; so he that loveth
Silver shall not be satisfied with *Sil-*
ver; nor he that loveth *Abundance*,
 with *Increase*.

Eccl. v. 10.

— * *Scilicet improbe*
Crescunt Divitiæ; tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei.

Something is, and will be wanting; and the restless Man is still a *Slave* and a *Seeker*, and thinks himself abridg'd and streightned in some necessary and essential Part of his Welfare. A new *Purchase* has always fresh Conveniences, and an additional *Preferment* has a Number of Attractives. Such a *Situation* is necessary for our *Health*, and such an *Income* for the Hospitality of our *Table*: Our Neighbour's *Vineyard* would be an handsome Enlargement to our *Demefnes*, and the pulling down of *his House* might add a more august Entrance, or beautiful Prospect to *our own*.

Thus Covetousness always makes fresh Proposals, and pushes on her Votaries to Variety of Pursuits: New Cares and Anxieties disturb their Breasts, and the farther they proceed in their Projects, the more are they distracted in their secular Affairs, and at the greater Distance

* Horat. Carmin. lib. 3. Od. 24.

must they be removed from that Happiness, which a contented Mind in any Condition of Life, would have intitled them to. Sermon XVIII.

Secondly, The Example of *Haman* will shew us the Vanity of *Greatness*.

What our Saviour says of Hypocrisy, seems, in some Measure, true of Greatness; 'tis like a painted *Sepulchre*, splendid and *beautiful without*, but full of Rottenness and *dead Mens Bones within*. The Prospect of this Pageantry may be agreeable and taking to the Eye at a Distance; but a nearer Insight will discover the Fallacy, and expose the Nakedness and Deformity of it.

The Ascent to Honour is dangerous and laborious; and a great many Rubs and Obstacles lie in the Way of the Traveller. New Difficulties daily present themselves to our View; and some potent Rival or Competitor will be always galling and fatiguing us.

But, supposing we should surmount all Disasters, and arrive triumphantly at the highest Pitch and Eminence of Greatness. Alas! the Top of the Mountain is so slippery, and our Heads are so weak, that we must be always in Danger of Dizziness and Falling, and cannot be secure of maintaining our Station for a Moment. *Man in Honour abideth not, he is like the Beasts that perish.* Darts are level'd at him from every Quarter, and his Garlands and Drapery are a Prelude to his Sacrifice. Wherever he travels, a
Lion

Ps. lxi. 12.

Sermon *Lion is in the Way*; whenever he trips, some Malecontent is at Hand, to precipitate his Fall; and whenever he would quench his Thirst, the Poison is secretly convey'd into the Bowl.

XVIII.

Why then should we be so much taken with Form and Outside? Why should we so eagerly struggle for Dignities and Distinctions? Alas! It is not a Croud before, and a Multitude of Lackeys behind; it is not the *Fasces* and the *Lictors*; the Acclamations of the Rabble, and the Flattery of mercenary Dependents, which can establish and secure the Happiness of a great Man. No; * He may be uneasy in the midst of his Pomp and Grandeur, and in the Height of others *Mirth*, his own *Soul may be in Heaviness*. He may have invisible Disturbances from another Quarter, and receive the most violent Assaults from his own Mind. His Enemy is got *within the Fort*, and so is capable of doing him more Injury than a thousand false Friends *without the Walls*, can do him Service. Alas! What Acquaintance has a great Man with Happiness, so long as he is always grasping at Power, and hunting after Applause? These Things must keep the Soul in perpetual Agonies and Convulsions, and make the *inward Man* all over Uproar and Con-

* Non enim Gazæ, neque Consularis
Summover lictor miseros tumultus
Mentis, et curas laqueata circum
Tecta volantes.

Hor. Carm. lib. 2. Od. 16.

fusion. "Till this Hurry and Disorder are ceas'd, and Concord and Harmony succeed in the Place of them; till Humility has calm'd the Fury and Outrage of our Passions, and brought down the Swellings of an invenom'd Mind, it is as much impossible that a Man should be happy, as that Darknes should be Light, or Hell, Heaven. Sermon XVIII.

Thirdly, The Declaration of *Haman* will shew us the Prevalence of *Envy*.

That *Envy* should look *upwards* with Gnashing and Malice, is convey'd to us in the most obvious Idea of that Hellish Quality, and is what the Heathen Poets and Philosophers have fully remark'd to us in their Observations upon the Manners and Passions of Mankind.

Quodq; aliena capella gerat distentius uber, Horat. Tabescat.

A more surprizing Instance of the implacable Temper of this Fury, is, that in the Height of Grandeur, she should throw her Eyes *downward*, and find any Thing in an Inferior to provoke her Spleen, and sharpen her Indignation.

Fertilior seges est alieno semper in agro, Ovid. Vicinumq; pecus grandius uber habet.

It is the Property of *Envy* to magnify any Thing below her, and to sour her present Enjoyments with imaginary Evils. She fancies a rising Enemy in every Bubble, puts a false Construction upon the plainest Words, and gnashes and

Z

raves

Sermon raves at the most innocent Actions. If XVIII. Matters of Fact cannot be warp'd to her malicious Purposes, and a wise Man's Conduct is too well known to be openly oppos'd; she acts in a more subtle and clandestine Manner, and enters into the Secrets of the Heart, and ravages the very Recesses of Conscience. Here her Imagination is very fruitful, and Discoveries are obvious from every Corner: Here she sees Plots and Contrivances in Embryo, makes the very Thoughts and Intentions of a *Saint* criminal, and exacts the Blood and Treasure of her Neighbour solely upon her own execrable Jealousies and Suspicions.

Fourthly, The Declaration of *Haman* represents to us the Necessity of Contentment: *All this availeth me Nothing*; and if *all this* were augmented to Ten thousand Times as much more, the Complaint would still be renew'd, and *all this* would be too little for his Needs, and insufficient for his Happiness. It is not the *Things enjoyed*, but the *Mind* which should enjoy them, that occasions our Uneasiness: And if Men would but endeavour to secure the Tranquillity of their own Souls, and to work themselves into a religious State of Contentment by an Affiance in the Wisdom, and a Dependence on the Providence of God, they would soon be plac'd beyond the Flatteries of Greatness, or the Power of any worldly Accident: But when they
 carry

carry their Eye from themselves, and Sermon
look only on outward Enjoyments, they XVIII.
oftentimes court Shadows, and depend
upon Uncertainties, and like the Dove
that was sent out from the Ark, can find Gen. viii. 8,
no Settlement or Rest for the Sole of their⁹.

Feet, till they return home, and prepare a
Place for Happiness, by banishing the
Mutinies and Disturbances of their own
Mind.

Religion has taught us to be content
with Food and Raiment; and Reason will
over-look Superfluities, and despise Abun-
dance, as long as we are supplied with
the Conveniences and Comforts of Life.
Nature herself has certain Bounds and
Limits prescrib'd her, and (unless she be
constrain'd and forc'd) doth not trans-
gress the Rules of Moderation and Tem-
perance. All the Beings, both of the
natural and *moral* World, have some ul-
timate End which they aim at, and
when they have applied the proper
Means for the Attainment of it, they *do*,
or *ought* to rest satisfied with their En-
deavours. A perpetual Strife and Hurry
about proceeding farther than we were
design'd, does but weaken our Faculties,
and destroy that Happiness which the
Author of Nature intended we should
enjoy. Thus *Drunkenness* and *Gluttony*
break that Constitution, which Sobriety
and Temperance were design'd to pre-
serve; and the Care of getting, and the
Fear of losing an Estate, prevents all the
Comfort and Satisfaction of Enjoyment.

Sermon XVIII. He, therefore, that would arrive to any Degree of Happiness in this World, must learn how to restrain his Appetites and curb his Desires: He must know how to be *abased*, as well as *exalted*; how to be *hungry*, as well as how to be *full*; how to *suffer Need*, as well as how to *abound*. If he should meet with Crosses and Disappointments, complaining will but aggravate and enhance his Misery: If he should be fortunate and successful, Ambition and Covetousness will make him more restless and uneasy: But Contentment and Resignation will calm and smooth all the Insurrections and Tumults of his boisterous Mind, and lodge him securely in the Arms of Providence, by fixing his Expectations and Dependencies upon the infinite Wisdom and Goodness of an omnipotent God.

Secondly, My next general Observation from the Text, is, That there is a Meanness of Temper in ambitious Men, which discovers itself in the Injustice of their Proceedings against those below them. For the Carriage and Deportment of *Haman* towards *Mordecai*, and the hellish Contrivances to ruin both *Him* and his *Family*, shew us how unwilling great Men are to over-look any little Disrespects or Incivilities; and how they fancy their Persons despised, or their Honour affronted by every trifling Neglect or Opposition of an Inferior. Whereas, *Solomon* tells us, *That the Discretion of a Man deferreth his Anger, and it is his Glory to pass over a Transgression*;

Prov. xix.
41.

The Discontented Statesman.

341

gression; and a Greater than he hath commanded us, *To love our Enemies, and do Good to those that hate us*; these Men think Revenge essential to Honour, and the putting up of an Affront an Argument of Cowardice. But let the Cholerick and Haughty pretend what they will, the Design of Greatness is not to support our own Pride, and crush our Inferiors; but to be exemplary in our Stations, and beneficial to all that are round about us. Those who are *uppermost*, should study to adorn their Dignities by the Virtues and Graces of a good Life, *and to let their Light so shine before Men*, that Others may not only *see their good Works*, but *feel* the comfortable Influence and Effects of them. They should endeavour to let their inward Qualifications keep Peace with their outward Grandeur; to be as *Good* as they are *Great*, and as *Virtuous* as they are *High*. As they pretend, that their Power is a Ray of the Deity, so they should imitate the divine Nature in the Execution of it: As they think themselves compos'd of better Clay than common Mortals, and to have more visible Features and Resemblances of their Maker; so they should transcribe the Excellencies and Perfections, and practice the Goodness and Generosity of God: *For he maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust*. When great Men do not copy after this Original, nor tread in the Foot-steps of their Maker, they

Sermon

XVIII.

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Matt. v. 44.

v. 45.



Sermon XVIII. Characters. Ambition has contracted their Souls, and a Meanness of Spirit discovers itself in all their Actions. They have false Aims in View, and prosecute their Designs by unjustifiable Means: And then it is not their Pretensions to Honour which can bring them off from the Imputation of Tyranny, nor the Height of their Stations which can excuse their Injustice and Barbarity towards those below them. They are accountable to a superior Master as well as the Vulgar, and the same moral and divine Laws are the Subjects of both their Practice. Virtue will still have its Force, the *Bible* be the Rule, and Conscience the Judge of our Actions. By *this*, the King and his People, the Noble and the Peasant must one Day be tried: And if great Men will violate this sacred Law, and be guilty of little Things, they must be accounted mean-spirited and dastardly. Their very Ambition is Cowardice, and their Pretence to *lord it over others*, arises from a Narrowness of Spirit, and is suggested by the Fears and Jealousies of what others, invested with Power, may do to them.

*Thirdly*, My next Observation from *Haman's* Uneasiness at *Mordecai's* not bowing, is, That it is oftentimes in the Power of very little and inconsiderable Things to fret and disturb an aspiring Person. The Foundation of this Remark is taken from the Indigence of human Nature, and the Necessity of foreign Assistances

ances to furnish out Materials for Pride and Vanity to build with. No Man can be both Idol and Worshipper himself; but must be forc'd to pack an Audience and bribe the Multitude, or else his Excellencies may lie undiscover'd, or the Pageantry pass by without any Observance. One cross-grain'd Fellow may occasion more Disturbance in a Cavalcade or a Triumph, than an hundred officious Sy-cophants, or mercenary Applauders have been able to do Service. Satyr has liv'd, when Flattery has expir'd; and an ill-natur'd Jest has been unhappily remembered, and frequently repeated, when a fulsome Panegyrick or Dedication has been hiss'd at and exploded. Universal Respect is the Aim of a Courtier, and one or two *Exceptions* break in upon the *Rule of Honour*, and seem to resemble a black Cloud which moves fullenly along to interpose between Heaven and Earth, and intercept the Rays and eclipse the Glory of the great Ruler of the Day.

There is no such Thing as Independence in this World; and by Consequence, there should be no such Thing as Disdain or Resentment, for fear that what is trampled upon and despised may turn mutinous and refractory, and be stimulated and spirited up to the Ruin of the Scornful and Contemner. Whoever considers the necessary Dependence and Connection in the rational or physical World, ought to applaud the minutest Parts, as Constituents of the

Sermon Beauty and Regularity of the whole.  
 XVIII. Every Screw, or Pin is essential to the Motion of the Machine; and every Drop of Rain, or Fan of Air refreshes the Face of the Earth, and helps Nature to *increase and multiply*. Our *uncomely Parts* have more abundant *Comeliness*; and what may be thought superfluous, will be found, upon due Enquiry, to be absolutely necessary. Every Juice and Humour of the Body have their Use, and every Limb and Member their distinct Office. It is true, the Power of Command lies in the Tongue, and the Seat of Beauty is the Face; but the Lillies and the Roses would quickly fade, if they had not their Nourishment from another Quarter; and *Edicts* and *Manifestoes* would be easily trampled upon, if there was a Defect of Obedience in the inferior Members.

In short, whether we respect the *Body Natural*, or the *Body Politic*; whether we consider the Works of Generation, or the Products of Art; we shall find that Beauty, Life, Harmony, and Duration, do in some Measure depend upon what we call little and inconsiderable Things. Who can be suppos'd nearer the Seat of Happiness than a Prince? And yet it oftentimes lies at the Mercy of the meanest Peasant in his Dominions to incommode and annoy him. Disgust in a Subject is like stopping a small Duct or Passage in the Body; the Humour will be apt to discharge itself into another Part, and to endanger the  
 the



the Welfare of the whole. We have Sermon a farther Instance of this in *Abab* and XVIII. *Naboth*: For the former was so far from being happy in the Possession of a flourishing Kingdom, that whilst the latter refused him his little Vineyard for a Garden of Herbs, he came into his House, heavy and displeased, and laid him down upon his Bed, and turned away his Face, and would eat no Bread. Thus he, who governed the Kingdom of Israel, could have no Command over himself: The Refusal of a Trifle stabb'd the Monarch to the Heart, and a little Spot of Ground was more considerable to an envious and ambitious Eye, than all the large Territories of *Samaria*.

Fourthly, I observe from the Account that has been produc'd concerning *Haman*, That Discontent in Ministers occasions them to give bad Counsel to their Masters, and to do ill Offices to their Fellow-Subjects. For the Truth of this Observation, (besides what has been hinted before) I would beg you to turn to the 5th, 6th, 8th, and 9th Verses of the Third Chapter of this Book of *Esther*; where you will be informed, That when *Haman* saw that *Mordecai* bowed not, nor did him Reverence, then was *Haman* full of Wrath: And he thought scorn to lay Hands on *Mordecai* alone, and he said unto King *Ahasuerus*, There is a certain People scattered abroad, and dispersed among the People in all the Provinces of thy Kingdom, and their Laws are diverse from all People,  
neither

Sermon *neither keep they the King's Laws; there-  
XVIII. fore it is not for the King's Profit to suffer  
them. If it please the King, let it be Writ-  
ten that they may be destroyed.*

By this Quotation it appears, that *Haman's* Revenge was superior to that of the fore-mentioned Instance of *Abab*, tho' both of them were to be attended with the most barbarous Consequences. For *Abab* was content with the Blood and Possessions of his obstinate Subject; but *Haman* scorned a single Victim, and was willing to inflict a National Punishment for a Personal Offence. This Arbitrary and Blood-thirsty Humour we find frequently prevalent in Public Ministers, when Pride and Ambition have gain'd Admittance to the Throne, and been intrusted with the Disposal of Favours and the Execution of Power. Your *Abito-phels* and *Machiavels* have been always remarkable for sanguinary Proceedings, and styl'd their own Safety, the Good of the Public, and the Right of the Subject. The Civil Sword must vindicate their private Quarrels, and every *Knee* must be humbled, every *Neck* must be lop'd, which cannot bow to the *State-Idol*, and worship the *Golden Image* which *Nebuchadnezzar* has set up.

*Fifthly*, The last Observation from the preceding Transaction between *Haman* and *Mordecai*, is, That Almighty Providence oftentimes raises up great Men to make them shew their Discontent in their  
Stations,

Stations, and so the more effectually to prepare them for their own Ruin.

Sermon  
XVIII.

*Vice* as well as *Virtue*, is most conspicuous in an high Station, and like a *Beacon on the Top of a Mountain*, attracts the Eyes of every Traveller. That Envy, which could only fume and look pale in an inferior Sphere, that Desire of Domineering and Insulting, which could only swell in the envenom'd Breast of a private Person; do both of them exert and display themselves, when they are mounted into the *Seat of Dignity*, and have acquir'd a more spacious Field for acting. In this Case, the Multitude comes to be affected, and every Eye is cast up to the Prime Agent. The Spectators of a great Man's Proceedings are numerous; the Scene of Enmity is enlarged, and Inferiors turn Foes, according to the Disgusts and Injuries they have received. Thus Greatness in a natural Sense is a Snare, Pride is the Fore-runner of our own Ruin; and what should be our Security, proves oftentimes an Occasion of *Falling*. Honour is precarious, and Promotion fleeting and momentary. The *Ear* of a Monarch is no Inheritance, neither is the *Cabinet* and the *Council* entail'd upon a Family. Let *Sejanus* make a false Step, and every one will trample him under Foot, or spurn him into the Kennel. Let the *Rain descend*, the *Floods rise*, the *Winds blow*, and beat upon the *House*; and the sandy Foundation of Honour will quickly give Way, and great will be the Fall thereof,

Matt. vii.  
27.



Sermon of, ridiculous and contemptible the stately  
XVIII. Ruins.

\* Dr. *Prideaux*, in his late inimitable History, has produc'd an Instance in *Agathocles* and *Agathoclea*, parallel in the most leading Circumstances to what the Scriptures have recorded of *Haman*: These two Persons having rul'd one of the *Ptolemies* to his Decease, and proposed to secure the Regency of his Successor in his Minority, and to cut off a faithful and eminent Statesman, who stood in the Way of their Usurpation, were obliged at last to deliver up their Royal Charge to the People, and were both executed with their Mother *Oenanthé*, their *Sisters*, *Kindred*, and all other their *Creatures*.

From this Fact, the learned Historian makes the following Reflections, very pertinent to this last Observation, which we have drawn from the Fate of *Haman*:  
 “ Such Reckonings wicked Favourites  
 “ are often brought to, when deprived of  
 “ that Power, whereby they have abused  
 “ the People. The Power alone, in this  
 “ Case, is apt enough to create Envy,  
 “ but it is much more so, when employed for unjust and wicked Purposes;  
 “ the only Method to make any one safe  
 “ in such Stations, is to do nothing else  
 “ in them but what shall be in all Times  
 “ justifiable. ”

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\* *Prid. Connect. Part. 2. Bo. 2.*

Let me, therefore, advise you, in the Sermon  
Close of this Discourse, to the Practice XVIII.  
of Humanity, Justice, and Affability, in  
the Discharge of your several Posts and  
Employments. If any Man is promoted,  
or moved higher than his Neighbour, let  
him not abuse the Munificence of his  
Prince or his Patron, or extend his Pow-  
er to the Oppression of Innocence: But  
let him look upon his Inferiors as his Bre-  
thren, and suffer as honest and worthy  
Men as himself to live unmolested and  
retir'd in a lower Station. In fine, let  
us move in Confort and Harmony, and  
learn the Art of Contentment in every  
Condition of Life. Let not the Superi-  
ors hector, nor the Rulers tyrannize, nor  
the Subjects rebel. Let Ambition be  
subdued, Faction silenc'd, Pride mor-  
tified, and all arbitrary Proceedings aban-  
don'd, that the *God of Peace may rule  
plentifully in our Hearts*, and the blessed  
Fruits of *Humility and Forgiveness* distin-  
guish themselves in all our Dealings and  
Conversation with our Christian Brethren.  
*Amen.*

*Now to God the Father, God the Son,  
and God the Holy Ghost, Three Per-  
sons, but One God, be rendred and af-  
cribed all Might, Majesty, Glory, and  
Adoration, from henceforth and for  
evermore. Amen.*

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*The Excellency, Usefulness, and  
Obligation of Charity.*

A SERMON Preached  
at BATH.

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MARK xii. 41, 42, 43, 44.

*And Jesus sat over against the Treasury, and beheld how the People cast Money into the Treasury: And many that were Rich cast in much.*

*And there came a certain poor Widow, and she threw in two Mites, which makes a Farthing.*

*And he called unto him his Disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor Widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the Treasury.*

*For all they did cast in of their Abundance: But she of her Want did cast in all that she had, even all her Living.*

Sermon  
XIX.  
~~~~~

NOTwithstanding Covetousness hath
gain'd the Ascendent of little
Minds, and many plausible Excuses
may

The Excellency, Usefulness, &c.

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may be invented against Charity it
self; yet common Sense, as well as Re-
ligion, will inform us, how a *seasonable*
Gift is acceptable to our Maker, useful to
the Indigent, and beneficial to the Giver.
For, though our *Goodness reacheth not un-*
to God, who hath the *Fulness of the Earth*
in his Possession, and the Perfection of
Happiness in his own incomprehensible
Nature; though our Oblations are no
ways *profitable* to him, who *eateth not*
Bulls Flesh, nor *drinketh the Blood of Goats*;
yet the *Saints upon Earth* are his Substi-
tutes, and *such as excel in Wisdom* and
Piety, the meritorious Objects of our Be-
neficence and Liberality. These are they
who now tender their Petitions to you,
and present themselves in the Name of
their Maker; who are willing to trea-
sure up the Redundance and Superfluity
of your Fortunes, and have the Promise
of returning the Encrease thereof, in the
Salvation of your Souls.

Consider, therefore, my Brethren, the
Excellency of the Duty which you are
now to be excited to; the Capacities
you are all in of performing it; and the
Happiness you are courted to enjoy by
such a Performance. Your Saviour has
chalk'd out the Path for you to walk
in, and has adapted his Discourse to the
Condition and Circumstances of every
Auditor. *Riches* can want no Arguments
to be liberal, in Gratitude and Duty to
that

Sermon
XIX.

XIX

Sermon that God, who hath given Abundance :
 XIX. Neither hath Poverty any Need to with-
 draw her Offerings, when *two Mites* have
 such an high Encomium, when the Va-
 lue of a single *Farthing* has so surpris-
 ing an Acceptance.

Jesus sat over against the Treasury, and beheld how the People cast Money into the Treasury : And many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor Widow, and she threw in two Mites, which make a Farthing. And he called unto him his Disciples, and said unto them, verily I say unto you, that this poor Widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the Treasury : For all they did cast in of their Abundance ; but she of her Want did cast in all that she had, even all her Living.

These Words represent to us the Sitting of an august and venerable Assembly, not unlike to this present Audience ; glittering with all the Advantages of Fortune, and publickly acknowledging the Bounty of Providence, by a dutiful Distribution of their Substance to the Poor. God himself is seated at the *Head of the Congregation*, and presides over the Oblations and Prayers of his People : Omniscience looks into the Heart of every Giver, and Justice passes Sentence upon the Worth and Efficacy of the Gift.

Now

Now before no less solemn Assembly **Sermon**
than that of the *Jewish Nation*, and up- **XIX.**
on the same charitable Occasion as the
casting of Money into the Treasury; I hope
that I shall be heard with Patience in
the Discharge of that Province which is
here assigned me.

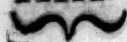
For the better Prosecution of the Text,
I shall apply myself.

FIRST, To explain the Nature of
that Charity which is exhibited to
us in the Text, and to shew, in what
Respects, *ours* may be conformable
to it.

SECONDLY, To represent to you
that omniscient Eye which inspects
and regards our Charity; *Jesus sat*
over against the Treasury, and beheld
how People cast in Money.

THIRDLY, To discourse of the
Largeness of some Mens Charity
above others; *many that were rich,*
cast in much.

FOURTHLY, To descend to the
poor Widows two Mites, and to ex-
hort the meaner Sort of People to
contribute something, by her pow-
erful Example.



The Excellency, Usefulness,

FIFTHLY, To shew, That *little* Alms may have an equal Acceptance with, and sometimes a Preference to, *greater*.

SIXTHLY, To use some farther Arguments with the *Rich*, to make their Charity as deserving as the *poor Widow's* in the Text.

SEVENTHLY, To adapt the whole Discourse to the Occasion of our present Meeting, and to provoke your Charity, as well from the Consideration of your own Interest, as those many deserving Objects which are now before you.

FIRST then, I am to explain the Nature of that Charity, which is exhibited to us in the Text; and to shew in what Respect, *Ours* may be conformable to it: *The People cast Money into the Treasury*; that is, they threw their Alms into a *Chest*, which was plac'd on Purpose, in the Temple, to receive the *Free-will Offerings* of those who *came thither to worship*. These Offerings were not so much for the Repair and Beautifying of the Temple, as for other pious and charitable Uses; and we may conclude from a Passage in the *Second Book of Maccabees*, that *Widows and Orphans* were plentifully supplied from this Fund: For, when an Information was given to *Apolonius*

lonius, by one Simon, the Governor of the Temple, that the Treasury in Jerusalem was full of infinite Sums of Money; so that the Multitude of their Riches, which did not pertain to the Account of the Sacrifices, was innumerable, and that it was possible to bring all into the King's Hand: And when also, pursuant to this Intelligence, a Demand was made of the said Treasure by Heliodorus, the King's Agent; the High-Priest frankly told him, That there was such Money laid up for the Relief of Widows and Fatherless Children, but that he could not alienate it from its proper Use, or apply it to his Majesty's Service; because that it was altogether impossible that such Wrongs should be done unto them that had committed it to the Holiness of the Place, and to the Majesty and inviolable Sanctity of the Temple, honoured over all the World.

Sermon XIX.

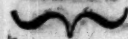
2 Mac. 13: 9, 10.

ver. 12.

From this Fact, we may gather the Design of the Free-will Offerings to the Treasury; and the Condition of those Persons who were to be supported and relieved by these generous Gifts: And we are also, by Parity of Reason, to conclude, that our Collections, being made in the like sacred Places, for the same pious Designs, and some of the same indigent Objects, will be as duly applied to their proper Uses on Earth, and as equally accepted by the Father of Mercies in Heaven.

Sermon

XIX.



SECONDLY, For your greater Encouragement in *Well-doing*, I must beg Leave to represent to you, That Omniscent Eye which inspects and regards your Charity; *Jesus sat over against the Treasury, and beheld how People cast in Money*: He, who was born for the Interest of Mankind, and *went constantly about doing Good*, is now pleas'd to imploy some of his precious Minutes in supervising the Actions, and encouraging the Graces of his charitable Countrymen: An Office, this was, which may be an Encouragement to those who project and carry on the Delign of a public Charity, as well as a Consolation to such as bestow their Substance for the Redress of the Indigent. For who would not willingly be a Fellow-Labourer with his Lord and Master? Or what Pitch of Honour is so high and great, as not to receive an Addition from this distinguishing Service? What Hand would *come empty into the Presence of the Lord*? And what generous Spirit would not be proud of laying an Obligation even upon Heaven itself? *He that hath Pity upon the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord*: The Creator of all Things becomes his Debtor, and eternal Justice is Security for the Payment.

Prov. xix.
17.

What though your Charity be mix'd with the Multitude, and seem to pass unobserv'd amongst the Hurry of Givers? *Your Father who seeth in Secret*, distinguishes every Act of your Bounty, and is privy

privity to the very Views and Intentions, Sermon with which you present your Oblations. XIX.

He that planted the Ear, shall he not hear?

Or he that formed the Eye, shall he not see?

He that pondereth the Heart, shall he not be

consider? Shall not this inquisitive Being,

this Distinguisher of Merit, openly reward

your private Labour of Love, and render

to every Man according to his Works?

Pf. xciv. 9.

Prov. xxiv.

12.

THIRDLY, I am to discourse of the Largeness of some Men's Charity above others; *Many that were rich, cast in much.* This was no more than what was required and expected from them; no more, than what their own Fortunes enabled them to do, and God, *the Giver of all good Gifts*, hath commanded to be done. For great Estates were never design'd for the Pageantry and Ostentation, for the Pride and Tyranny of worthless Possessors; but were bestow'd upon particular Persons for Distinction and Merit's Sake, and Returns are exacted by the supreme Donor in the Fruits of Hospitality and Peace, and all manner of kind and generous Offices to a necessitous Neighborhood. *To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.* Generosity must flow from Abundance, and Charity is always an Expectant from a great House and a plentiful Fortune. *As none was to appear before the Lord empty;* so every Man was to give as he was able, according to the Blessing of the Lord thy God, which he hath given thee. If thou hast

Lu. xii. 48.

Deut. xvi.

16, 17.

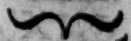
Sermon *Abundance, give Alms accordingly: Give*
XIX. *of thy Bread to the Hungry, and of thy*
Garments to them that are Naked. Give
unto the most High according as he hath en-
riched thee; and as thou hast gotten, give
with a cheerful Eye. Let even Profuse-
ness and Hilarity join Hand in Hand upon
this memorable Occasion; and the Dig-
nity of our God who receives, produce
an Oblation worthy of his Acceptance.
The Largeness of the Present is an Ac-
knowledgment and Recognition of Pro-
vidence; a grateful Tribute to that Al-
mighty Sovereign, from whom you have
received all your Substance, and to whom
you owe the profoundest Homage. To
be stingy to the Poor, when you have re-
ceiv'd liberally from God, is a Reflection
upon infinite Goodness, a Renunciation of
your bounden Obedience, and a Forfeiture
of your Claims to future Blessings. Give
an Account of your Stewardship, for ye
shall no longer be Stewards: The Talent
is put into bad Hands, and the Improve-
ment no ways answers the Expectation of
the Donor. Go to now, ye rich Men, weep
and howl for your Miseries that shall come
upon you. Be terribly astonished, ye Covetous
and Extortioners; for ye have perverted
your Trust, reproached your Maker, and
ruined your own Souls. O thou wicked
Servant, shouldst not thou also have had Com-
passion on thy Fellow-Servant, even as I had
Pity on thee? Shouldst not thou have
been Liberal by my Example, and have
distri-

Tob. iv. 16.
 Ecclus.
 xxxv. 10.

Jam. v. 1.

Matt. xviii.
 23.

distributed to Others as thou hast receiv'd thy self? Sermon XIX.



FOURTHLY, I shall descend to the *poor Widow's Mites*, and exhort the meaner Sort of People to contribute something by *her* powerful Example; *she* of *her Want* cast in two Mites, which make a *Farthing*, being all that *she* had, even all *her Living*. *She*, (indulgent and compassionate Woman!) hath abridged her self of the necessary Supports of Life, that she might be aiding and Assistant to Others: *She*, who by her *Widowhood* and Poverty had a Right to the Offerings of the Rich, and might claim a Share in the common Contributions, became herself a Benefactor to the public Fund, and shewed a lovely Example to her wealthy Superiors. O charitable Soul! O *blessed Daughter of Israel!* Whose extensive Mind disdain'd the Narrowness of thy Circumstances, and whose willing and generous Heart seem'd to upbraid the Want and Insufficiency of thy Hand!

None, I suppose, who *this Day* bear me, can be in a meaner Condition than this *poor Widow*, whose whole Livelihood was a *Farthing*; and yet the best of you cannot offer a more acceptable Sacrifice, or pass off with an higher Character of your Charity. This single Circumstance may not only upbraid the Stinginess of the Wealthy, but force even Poverty to be *Liberal*, and extort an Alms from those who think themselves qualified to receive

Sermon

XIX.

Eph. iv. 24.

1 Cor. xvi.
21.

One. St. Paul makes it one of the Ends of *Working with our own Hands*, that we may be in a Capacity of lightning the Burdens of our Brethren, and giving Assistance to them that need. The Artificer and Mechanic, by this Rule, are to save something of their daily Labour towards the Collection for the Saints; and to lay by in Store, as God hath prospered them, against the Tribulation and Adversity of their Fellow Christians. He, whose Talk is of *Bullocks*, or whose Fighting is with the *Vapour of the Fire*, must smite out Charity from the *Sweat of his Brows*, and regard other People's Families as well as his own.

And lest any of you should think that I am romantic in my Persuasions, or desirous of laying heavier Burdens upon your Shoulders than you are able to bear; I must take the Freedom to remark, That you Poor too have your Excess and Wantonness, and every petty Alehouse proclaims your execrable Mirth and Blasphemy. Now if your Extravagances were turned into another Channel, and what you could spare from Drunkenness employed in a better Cause; your Store would be increas'd, your Labours bless'd, your Bodies strengthened, and your Souls sav'd.—

But supposing, you should not be capacitated to contribute much towards the Relief of Others; yet Sobriety, Carefulness, and Labour will the better qualify you to provide for your own Household, and so shorten the Number of those

these Objects for whom we now petition, Sermon
and give Scope to well-disposed Christians XIX.
for other Acts of public Charity.

FIFTHLY, I am to shew, that *little* Alms have an equal Acceptance with, and sometimes a Preference to, *greater*; *The poor Widow hath cast in more than all they, which have cast into the Treasury.* Not that Want can vie with Abundance, or that a *Farthing* is of equal Value with a *Talent*; but the Circumstances of the Giver is to be taken into Consideration, and the Integrity of the Mind adds Weight and Efficacy to the Oblation. It is not every *Little* shall have a *great Reward*; but there must be an Union of other Circumstances to procure Acceptance, or else the Niggard might pass for Liberal, and the covetous Man might merit Applause.

In the Case before us, *Three Things* seem primarily and absolutely necessary.

First, That the Persons should be indigent themselves, who give little Alms.

Secondly, That they should give with a sincere Heart:

Thirdly, To the utmost of their Ability.

First, Would little Alms be equally acceptable with greater, the Person who gives, must be *Indigent*. For Circumstances make a vast Alteration in an Action,

Sermon

XIX.

Tob. xi. 8.

Action, and fix Merit where one would least expect it. The Demands of the Public cool the Heat of many a generous Mind, and the incessant Calls of our own numerous Families shut up those Hands which would otherwise be frequently and liberally opened. The Rule, in this Case, is, *If thou hast but little, do thy Diligence gladly to give of that little*: For the Brick must be proportionable to the Straw, and the Harvest, to the Seed. The Revenue of a Subject cannot rise to the Munificence of a Prince, nor the Indigence of a Beggar to the Affluence of a Courtier: Much less should a Prince screen himself by the Example of a Subject, or a Courtier sink down to the Stinginess of a Peasant.

Secondly, The Value of *Little Alms* depends much upon the *Sincerity* of the Giver.

2 Cor. viii.
12.

In all moral and religious Duties, the Heart is principally to be regarded, and *whatsoever defiles, or sanctifies a Man*, proceeds from that Fountain and Principle of Action. *If there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not*. God is not to be supposed to oblige his Creatures to Impossibilities, nor can he act consistently with his Wisdom, his Justice, and his Power, if he should deny the Means, and require the End; no more, than that Master can expect the Labour, who has tied up the Hands of his Servant; or the Performance of a Journey, when he has cut off the Feet of the Traveller.

seller. The Will, in all such Cases of Sermon
Exigence, is solely to be consulted; and XIX.
a Readiness and Compliance of the Mind, when the outward Powers are disabled, must denominate and justify Obedience.

In the Argument of Charity which is now before us, Those who are streightned in their Circumstances, seem to have greater Reason to be frugal and retentive; and we are to conclude, that a Frankness and Cheerfulness in them, as to what is lodg'd in their Power, are certain Signs of generous Dispositions, and come attended with secret Wishes of a more plentiful Fortunes for charitable Uses. In this Respect, *God loveth the chearful Giver: God, who giveth liberally himself, and upbraideth not*, delights in our Resemblance of his free and generous Goodness, and has ordered; *every Man do according as he hath purposed in his Heart, not grudgingly, or of Necessity; but he that giveth, with Simplicity; he that sheweth Mercy, with Cheerfulness.*—But

2 Cor. ix. 7.
Jam. i. 5.

Rom. xii.
8.

Thirdly, To take off all Manner of Excuses, or shuffling in our Alms, I shall lay before you, how the Excellency of a poor Man's Charity consists in acting up to his Abilities. All Poverty has not a Right to the fore-mention'd Plea of Impossibility: All Poverty (you see from the Text) is not to exempt us from Giving; neither may the Offering of *two Mites* be always the Proportion of a poor Man's Alms. *The Widow gave all that she had, even all her Living*, and for that

Rea-

Sermon Reason she is highly commended and
 XIX. distinguish'd by our Saviour for her Bounty. Not I presume, that her Example is to be so far stretch'd, as if every Man was to give away his whole Estate in a religious Phrenzy, or to begger himself that he might enrich others. For though there was a Time, when the Faith of a Convert was to be tried by disposing of his Goods, and laying the *Price at the Apostles Feet*; and our Saviour's Advice to the young Man, *was to sell all that he possessed, and give to the Poor, that he might have Treasure in Heaven*; yet these particular Preidents and Practices are so far from being *absolutely* or *universally* obliging, that they must, under our present Circumstances, be so interpreted, as to comport with other Evangelical Precepts, and not contradict the *Natural* and *Reveal'd* Duties of *providing for ourselves*, and our *Families*.

Acts iv. 34.

Mat. xix.

21.

The *utmost of our Ability*, therefore, in this Case, is no more than what is consistent with our Circumstances to give, the rest of our Substance being not properly our own, but being determined, either by the Supreme Donor or the Laws of our Country, to such Uses and Purposes as will not admit of an Alienation, without a manifest Fraud and Injustice to our Relations and Posterity.

However, great Care is still to be taken, even by the lowest Part of Mankind, that they neglect no Opportunities of *Getting*, that they may be able to *Distribute*;

tribute; and that they invent no frivolous Excuses and Arguments against Charity, when they have something in Store, and the Necessities of their Brethren are numerous and pressing. — But

SIXTHLY, I am to use some farther Arguments with the *Rich*, to make their Charity as acceptable as the *poor Widow's* in the Text: And here

First, I would advise them to a punctual Performance of all those Circumstances, whose Concurrence is necessary for the perfecting of a good Action. Their Heart must be duly affected, their Intention laudable, their Hand expeditious, the Gift seasonable, and the Quality agreeable to their Fortunes. An Act of Charity thus circumstantiated, we have transmitted to us by St. Paul, to the immortal Honour of the Churches of Macedonia: In a great Trial of Affliction (says ^{2 Cor. viii.} he) the Abundance of their Joy, and their ^{2, 3, 4} deep Poverty abounded unto the Riches of their Liberality. For to their Power (I bear Record) yea, and beyond their Power, they were willing of themselves: Praying us with much Intreaty, that we should receive the Gift, and take upon us the Fellowship of the ministering to the Saints.

Secondly, For the greater Encouragement of Charity, it is proper for Men of large Possessions to form true Notions of Riches: For would they but consider, that the First and main Use of these, is to support our own Lives, and provide for
our

Sermon
XIX.

our Families; and the *Second* and subordinate one, is to maintain those Titles and Dignities which Mens Birth or Merits have raised them to, and which the good Order and Government of a Kingdom requires from them; they would find their Necessities easily supplied, and a vast Surplusage of Wealth for other Uses. By this Means, that *Reason*, which is so peculiar to an High Birth and Education, would soon distinguish itself, and Mercy and Compassion would glow in an exalted Breast: The Rich and the Noble would retrench the Vanities and Superfluities of Life, and suffer at least *the Dogs to gather up the Crumbs* under their lordly and magnificent *Tables*. The *Epicure* and *Voluptuary* would learn by Experience, that Health is the Effect of Morification and Abstinence, and every Fast may abate so much of the Expence of *sumptuous Living*, as to give them a fresh Opportunity of *dealing their Bread to the Hungry, and of bringing the Poor that are cast out, to their Houses*.

If. lviii. 7.

Luke xii.
33.

Lastly, If to this proper Use and Design of *Riches*, a considerate Man would add the Fickleness of their Nature, the Shortness of their Duration and the Emptiness of their Enjoyment; he would, by giving *Alms purchase a more enduring Substance, providing himself Bags which wax not old, a Treasure in the Heavens that faileth not, where no Thief approacheth, neither Moth corrupteth*.

Thirdly, For the Promotion of Charity,

I would suggest to the Rich, what may be required of Persons in their Conditions. **Sermon XIX.**

The higher the Station, the brighter the Example; the larger the Talent, the greater should be the Increase. Men are not born to batten in Ease, and dissolve in Luxury; but to be serviceable in their Generations, and bountiful to their indigent Brethren. *I have said, ye are Gods, and all the Children of the most High. Be ye, therefore, merciful in your Tempers, and God-like in your Benefactions: Be allied, in Goodness as well as Power, to your Father which is in Heaven, who maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust.*

Matt. v. 45.

But having touch'd upon this Argument already, it is superfluous to add any more. *I know where I am, and to whom I speak; to Gentlemen, and not Niggards; to Persons whose Character is Mercy and Generosity; whose distinguishing Sense and good Education cannot bear that any Disgrace or Indigence should rest upon their Christian Faith and common Humanity: To such Persons, I shall now only recite some beautiful Passages from the Book of Job, who being both a Prince and a Judge, and having been both merciful and liberal in these two Capacities, appeals with Pleasure to his charitable Deeds, and is the properest Example for your Imitation.*

If I have (says he) with-held the Poor from their Desire, or have caused the Eyes of the Widow to fail: Or have eaten my

Job xxxi.
16, 17, 19,
20, 22, 40.

Morse!

Sermon
XIX.

Morsel myself alone, and the Fatherless hath not eaten thereof: If I have seen any perish for want of Clothing, or any Poor without Covering: If his Loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the Fleece of my Sheep: Then, let mine Arm fall from my Shoulder-blade, and mine Arm be broken from the Bone: Let Thistles grow instead of Wheat, and Cockle instead of Barley.

Fourthly, The last Topic, from which I would argue Rich Men into Charity, is the Advantage of their Circumstances. It is you who are placed in proper Stations to dictate to your Inferiors, and influence this lower World. It is you, who like the Sun in the Firmament, can diffuse your Rays, and communicate your Heat; who can actuate and invigorate the Parts of sluggish Matter, and give Spirit and Briskness to the dejected and useless Sons of Men. It is you, who can raise the Monuments of your Goodness in the most desolate Corners of the World; who can be Eyes to the Blind, Hands to the Maimed, and Feet to the Lame. It is you, who can open the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings; who can put a Song of Praise and Thanksgiving to our God, into the Tongues of them that are unborn, and make the Generations which are yet to come, to call you blessed. Others may have the Inclination, but you only have the large Power of doing Good. Riches in themselves are no Ways valuable or desirable; and if the Suggestions of Covetousness be pursued, they will prove destructive of Salvation,
and

and pierce a Man through with many Sorrows. It is the Use must ennoble the Blessing; it is Charity must sanctify the Lump, and the Relief of others which must fill our own selves.

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XIX.

SEVENTHLY, I am to apply this Discourse to the Occasion of our present Meeting, and excite you to Charity, as well from the Consideration of your own Interest, as of those real and deserving Objects which are now before you.

This Day is more peculiarly set apart for the Exercise of Charity, a Design truly laudable in itself, constantly practis'd in the most populous Towns of the Kingdom, and wisely carry'd on for the Exigence of this City. For since the Place itself is wholly devoted to the Accomodation, the Pleasure, and Advantage of *Strangers*, and destitute of that Trade and Commerce, which might enable some of its generous *Citizens* to settle lasting Funds for the Poor; we are oblig'd to draw in foreign Helps for the Support of our Natives, and to request from others what we would be gladly capacitated to perform ourselves. But we hope our Petitions will not be thought impertinent, nor our Desires unreasonable, since it is the Glory of God, the Establishment of Truth, and the Propagation of Piety, we aim at. You, it is to be presum'd, will join with us in these merciful and generous Undertakings, and be ready to make some Acknowledgments to God for the surprizing

Sermon Benefits you have received in this Place.
 XIX. You live here almost by Miracles; *Naaman's Cure* is daily perform'd by the *washing* in our *Jordan*; your Age, like *Nestor's* is renewed, and your *Flesh* comes again like the *Flesh* of a young Child. As you, therefore, have received or expect Health yourselves, so are ye under a Necessity of giving the Supports of Life to other Men. *Without Charity, ye are nothing*: Your Attendance in the Temple is Grimace, and your Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, Hypocrisy: Your Prayers will be rejected, and your Sacraments prove useless and ineffectual: Your Diseases will return with double Fury for your Ingratitude, and your *Leprosies*, like *Naaman's* on *Gebazi*, stick the closer to you for your Covetousness.

But, lest any of you should still fear that he might impoverish himself by his Bounty to others, I would entreat you to consider the prolific Nature of Charity, and the many Promises and ample Blessings which are to attend the Exercise of this Christian Grace. The Exhortations to Charity are so frequent and numerous in every Page of Scripture, as if this only were the *one Thing needful*, and both our temporal and eternal Happiness depended upon the Practice of it. Devotion is languid, and Faith dead at the Absence of Charity; the Pretensions to Purity are groundless, and the Love of God, a bare speculative Notion. *For He that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love*

John iv. 20.
 21

and Obligation of Charity.

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Mic. vi. 8.

love God whom he hath not seen? For this Commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his Brother also. He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee? What! but to do Justice, and love Mercy: To Scatter, that thou mayst Increase; to Lend, that it may be Repaid thee; to Relieve others, that thou mayst be Enrich'd thyself. I have been young (says David) and now am old; and yet saw I never the Righteous (that is, the Charitable Man) forsaken, nor his Seed begging their Bread. The Righteous is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his Seed is blessed: His good Deeds shall secure his Reputation, and embalm his Memory; his Alms shall augment his Store, and entail a Blessing upon his Posterity. Then cast thy Bread upon the Waters; for thou shalt find it after many Days. Honour the Lord with thy Substance, and with the First-fruits of thine Increase; so shall thy Barns be filled with Plenty, and thy Presses shall burst out with new Wine. For the liberal Soul shall be made Fat; and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself. The Increase shall descend to Futurity, and the Reward be ten thousand-fold in the Kingdom of Glory. The merciful Man doth good to his own Soul; and the Fruit of the Righteous is a Tree of Life.

Ps. xxxviii.
25, 26

Eccles. xii. 1

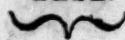
Prov. iii. 9,
10.

—xi. 25

There are some Objects which are more fitted to move your Compassion, and which will more certainly intitle you to an everlasting Reward. *The Household of Faith*

B b 2

has

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XX.

has the Preference in Scripture, and *Widows and Orphans* are always recommended as the most forlorn Part of our Species. It may, perhaps, be in your Power to secure the Morals of the next Generation, and, by infusing good Principles into the Minds of Youth, to retrieve the Honour of this impious Age. You can preserve the Native Innocence of Childhood, repair the Loss or Negligence of Parents, and raise an useful Colony of Men for the Service of the Public: *And God is not unrighteous, to forget your Work and Labour of Love, which ye have shewed toward his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Saints, and do minister.* The Benefaction is to your God, and the Use of it apply'd to the Poor; but the Glory shall be reflected upon yourselves, and the triumphant Crown shall adorn your own Heads. *Come, ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World: For I was naked, and ye clothed me: I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink.* Perhaps indeed, you may not have perform'd all these good Offices to me in Person; but your Assistance of others is an Obligation on my self, *and inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* They are to sollicite in my Absence, and to gather Contributions in my Name: They are destitute of Friends, and deplorable in their Circumstances; helpless by Reason of their tender Age, and

Heb. vi. 10.

Mat. xxv.
34, 35, 36.

Ver. 40.

and Obligation of Charity.

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and expos'd to Hardships by the Improvidence of others. *Whosoever, therefore, shall give to drink to one of these little Ones a Cup of cold Water only, in the Name of a Disciple, and in Quality of a Scholar of the Christian Faith, Verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his Reward.*

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XIX.

Mat. x. 42.

O Blessed Jesus, enable us after thy Example to be Charitable, and intitle us by thy Grace to the *Recompence* of this heavenly Reward!

O Lord, who has taught us that all our Doings without Charity are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our Hearts that most excellent Gift of Charity, the very Bond of Peace, and of all other Virtues, without which, whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee: Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's Sake. *Amen.*

Collect for
Quinquag.
Sunday.

Martha's Care, and Mary's Piety.

A
S E R M O N

Preached in the
Cathedral-Church at WELLS.

LUKE X. 41, 42.

*Jesus answered and said unto her,
Martha, Martha, thou art careful
and troubled about many Things:
But one Thing is needful. And Mary
hath chosen that good Part which
shall not be taken away from her,*

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XX.

John xi. 1,
2, 3.
2.

IN the Verses preceding my Text, we have an Account of our Saviour's paying a Visit to *two Sisters*, whom he had a tender Regard and Affection for, as well upon the Score of their *own personal Virtues*, as the Faith and Piety of their *Brother Lazarus*.

One

One of these Sisters (whom we gather from the *Evangelist*, to be Owner of the House, and may well suppose to have the chief Management of the Family) was wholly taken up in making Provision for this honourable Guest, and receiving all his Followers with that Decency and Respect which was due to the Attendants of such a Master.

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XX.
Luke x. 38.

The Other waited upon our Saviour as a *Disciple*, and received with all Humility and Reverence those Heavenly Instructions which dropp'd from his Tongue; concluding (it may be presum'd) that his Presence might be better employed than in *Feastings* and Entertainments, and that the Care of her own *Soul* was more incumbent upon her, than the Provision for other Peoples *Bodies*.

The Reception of our Lord and his Followers growing too burdensome to the Former of these Women, she petition'd our Saviour to discharge the Latter from her Attendance on his Doctrine, and to command her Assistance in the Business of the Family.

To this Petition our Saviour returns the moving and important Answer in the Text, under which is couch'd a gentle Reprimand to *Martha* for her unnecessary Care after the Things of this World, and an high Encomium of *Mary's* Zeal for those of another.

— Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many Things; but one Thing is needful: And Mary hath chosen that

Sermon *good Part, which shall not be taken away*
 XX. *from her.*

In Discourſing upon this Subject, I ſhall conſider the ſeveral Parts of the Text, in that Order which they lie before me: And here *Five Things* are remarkable.

FIRST, The Compellation, or the Nature of our Saviour's Addreſs to *Martha.*

SECONDLY, The Reprimand he gave her about her Care and Soli-
 citude concerning unneceſſary Things;
Thou art careful and troubled about many Things.

THIRDLY, A Direction to ſome-
 thing which is of greater Uſe and Importance; *But One Thing is need-
 ful.*

FOURTHLY, An Encomium up-
 on Mary's Wiſdom and Prudence for making Choice of this one uſeful and important Thing; *Mary hath choſen the good Part.*

FIFTHLY, A Reason aſſign'd for preferring Mary's Choice above Mar-
 tha's: And *That* is taken from the Duration, or laſting Nature of the Thing which ſhe had made Choice of; *The good Part ſhall not be taken away from her.*

FIRST,

F I R S T, I am to consider the *Compellation*, or the Nature of our Saviour's Address to *Martha*: *Martha, Martha.*

It is observable, that our Saviour doubles the Expression, and repeats the Person's Name twice at the first Entrance upon his Discourse, in Order that he might make the deeper Impression upon her Mind, and procure the greater Attention to his Doctrine. A single Call might have been neglected or forgotten by *Martha*, by Reason of that Hurry and Perplexity she underwent, in looking after her Household Affairs, and providing Entertainment for her Lord: But the Repetition of the Word must refresh her Memory, and fix her Attention; shew the Affection and Concern of the *Speaker*, as well as the Necessity and Importance of the *Speech*.

This Way of Address, by doubling the Person's Name, to whom we apply ourselves, may probably be thought a trivial Observation at the first View; but I must beg Leave to put you in Mind, that it is a Piece of natural Oratory, and what is in very common Use with those Masters of Speech, who are willing to recommend to their Hearers the Importance of the Subject they are treating of, and to steal upon their Affections by a seeming Regard for their Persons. We have a very lively Instance of this Nature, in that melting and pathetical Lamentation of our Saviour over *Jerusalem*: *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! Thou that killest the Prophets,*
and

Sermon and stoneſt them which are ſent unto thee;
 XX. if thou haſt known, even thou, at leaſt in
 this Day, the Things which belong to thy
 Peace.' Here every Word ſpeaks the Af-
 fection and Sincerity of a Friend; the
 very Thoughts labour for Vent faſter than
 the Tongue can utter them; and, like a
 Croud thronging out of a Door, are ſtop'd
 by their own Haſte, and repulſ'd for a
 Time, by the Eagernels of their own
 Zeal.

Matt. xxiii.
 37.

Now what might occaſion our Saviour
 to expreſs himſelf in this obliging and in-
 dearing Manner to Jeruſalem, was his Af-
 fection to his native Country, his Deſire
 for the Happineſs of *his Kindred in the*
Fleſh, and his Knowledge of the ap-
 proaching Ruin of their Capital City.
 For St. Luke farther informs us, that *when*
he came near, and beheld Jeruſalem, he wept
over it: Love diſcharged itſelf in Tears,
 and Friendſhip lamented what Reproofs
 could never reform.

Luk 19. 41.

The ſame Principle ſeems to actuate
 our Saviour in his Reply to *Martha*, and
 occasions that graceful and emphatical
 Repetition, which is full of ſo much Ten-
 derneſs and Affection towards her.

And this brings me to the next Thing
 to be inſiſted upon from the Text, *viz.*

SECONDLY, The Nature of that
 Reprimand, which our Saviour gave to
Martha, about her Care and Solitude,
 concerning unneceſſary Things; *Thou art*
careful and troubled about many Things.

This

This Reprimand was not of a severe **Sermon**
 and rugged Complexion; but such an one **XX.**
 as might proceed from a good-natur'd
 and indulgent Friend: From one that ra-
 ther pities the Infirmities, than aggra-
 vates the Faults, and upbraids the Per-
 sons of those he was to correct. It is
 like that which the Prophet *Jeremy*, and
 the *Psalmist* pray for, *Correct me, O Lord,* **Jer. 10. 24.**
in Judgment, not in thine Anger, lest thou
bring me to nothing: Or if I must be made
 an Example in this World, allot my Por-
 tion *amongst the Merciful, and let the Righteous* **Psal. 141. 5.**
smite me friendly and reprove me.

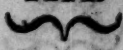
I hinted to you before, that St. *John*
 hath told us, that Jesus loved *Martha and* **Joh. xi. 5.**
her Sister Mary, and their Brother *Laza-*
rus; and from this Love and Affection of
 his, I cannot but conclude, that the Mild-
 ness and Gentleness of the Reproof in the
 Text did proceed. Our Saviour saw such
 a Disposition to Goodness in this Woman,
 as made him entertain an uncommon Re-
 gard for her Person, and by Consequence
 express his Sorrow and Concern, that she
 should not improve all Opportunities of
growing in Grace and Wisdom, and going
 on with Chearfulness to Perfection; but
 should by some trifling Incumbrances of
 this World, and some Modes and Punc-
 tilioes of Civility, suffer her younger Sis-
 ter to get the Start of her in Piety, and
 be the more able Proficient in the Chris-
 tian Faith.

What *Martha* was guilty of, was not,
 (as we can gather from Scripture) of a
 sinful

Sermon sinful Nature, but rather a slipping the
 XX. Opportunity of Knowledge, and a spending
 of that Time in providing for our
 Saviour's Reception, which she ought to
 have employ'd in Attention to his Doc-
 trine, and the Care of her own Soul. For
 we read in the Verses preceding my Text,
 Luk. 10. 39 *That her Sister Mary sat at Jesus's Feet,*
 40. *and heard his Words; but Martha was*
cumbred about much serving, and came to
him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that
my Sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid
her therefore that she help me.

Not that *Martha's* respectful Treat-
 ment of our Lord, or her plentiful Pro-
 vision for his Attendants, was, in its own
 proper Nature, any Ways blame-worthy
 or criminal: No; consider'd as an Act
 of Civility, it was no more the Subject of
 Reprehension, than her Sister *Mary's*
 John 11. 1, *anointing his Feet with the Ointment of cost-*
 2. c. 12. 3. *ly Spikenard, and her dutiful wiping them*
with the Hair of her Head: Which good
 Office was so far from being construed a
 mis-spending of Time, or an ill Appli-
 cation of Charge, that our Saviour himself
 did kindly accept of it as preparatory
 to his *Burial*, and highly extoll'd it, in
 Opposition to the captious Exceptions of
 a covetous and discontented *Judas*.

But then *Martha's* Error, in the Case
 before us, was in suffering the Forms of
 Civility to jostle out the Duties of Reli-
 gion, and permitting a seeming Peevish-
 ness and Ill-nature to discover itself in
 angry Complaints and Remonstrances a-
 gainst

gainst a devout Sister. However, since *Sermon*
Martha's Intentions were laudable, and *XX.*
 her Fault was only too much Officioufness, 
 and an over-nice Respect to our Saviour's
 Person ; it is worth our Notice, that the
 Reprehension was mild and gentle, and
 her Actions touch'd upon with all the
 Tenderness and Compassion imaginable.
 The Rebuke is not thrown out in Anger
 or Disdain, nor usher'd in with those
 Thunders and Anathemas which were
 vented against the *Scribes and Pharisees,* *Matt. 23.*
the Lawyers and Hypocrites : It is not like
 unto, *Wo unto thee, Chorazin, Wo unto thee,*
Bethsadia : It is not like unto, *Thou, Caper-* *v. 2, 3.*
naum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt
be brought down to Hell ; neither was it at-
 tended with those *Whippings and Scourg-*
ings which drove the *Buyers and Sellers*
out of the Temple ; but it seem'd to be ut- *Joh. 2. 15.*
 ter'd with a compassionate Voice, and a
 winning Countenance ; with a charitable
 Tongue, and an indulgent Heart. It was
 only *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and*
troubled about many Things : Variety di-
 stracts, and Hurry unsettles thy Mind ; but
 it were more adviseable that thy Thoughts
 were fix'd and united, and the *Grand*
Concern more vigorously and intensely pur-
 sued. *Thou art careful, and troubled about*
many Things ! Thou, alas ! like a good
 Houfwife, art taken up in the Oeconomy
 and Management of thy Family, and in
 a decent and hospitable Reception of thy
 Friends and Acquaintance ; but it were
 better for thine own Soul, and more con-
 ducive

ducive to thy real Interest, that thy Meditations were fix'd upon higher Objects, and thy God had *more*, and thy Friends *less* of thy Care.

THIRDLY, The next Thing in the Text, is a Direction to a Matter of greater Importance, than what *Martha* was busied about : *But One Thing is needful*; that is, *One Thing* is chiefly to entertain our Thoughts and employ our Time, and to be taken a particular Care of beyond other Matters : *One Thing* is to be principally in our View, and to rest under our most serious and mature Consideration; and all our Actions and Endeavours, in the Course of our lawful Callings, and the Progress of our Lives, must have a manifest Tendency towards the Furtherance and Promotion of this main and ultimate End. This great Duty is the Care of our Souls, and this *Care* consists in the Provision of such Virtues and Graces, whilst we are upon Earth, as may be a lasting Support to us in a future State: It is a lively Faith, and a regular Practice; a true Notion of God, and a sincere Discharge of our Duty.

Hic labor, hoc opus est.—

Not, but that there is a Time (as *Solomon* says) *for every Thing*; not, but that the Entertainment of our Friends, the keeping up of Hospitality, and the Recreation of our Bodies, are, in some moderate

derate Degree, as warrantable, as the Attendance at Church, and the Offering up of our Prayers, are necessary. However, we are still to consider, that Religion is the grand and principal Affair of Human Life, and that all other Things which relate to the Support of the Body, or the Convenience of our earthly Beings, are only to be made Use of as Means subordinate, and instrumental towards our *Chief End*. Tho' it may not be agreeable to our Health, or consistent with our Constitutions, to spend all our Time upon our Knees; tho' the Necessity of worldly Affairs may demand some of those Hours, which others employ in the Temple and their Closets; yet forasmuch as it is the Duty of every Christian to be *instant in Prayer*, and to *pray without ceasing*; the least that we can suppose such Precepts to amount to, is, that we should address ourselves with Frequency and Importunity to the *Throne of Grace*, and maintain in our Souls a ready Disposition, and an habitual Inclination to Devotion, and embrace all convenient Opportunities of *Offering up our Supplications and Intercessions* to God. The Necessity of this, or any other Duty, doth not employ such an absolute Restraint, as if it was to engross all our Time, and nothing else were to be transacted throughout the whole Course of our Life. Neither doth the *Care of One Thing needful* supersede or extinguish our Concern, in an inferior and limited Sense, for those other Things without which

Sermon which we cannot subsist in this World, or
 XX. be qualified even for the Exercise of Religion itself. It only denotes our principal Application to Piety, a vigilant and careful Attendance upon the several Parts of our Duty, and the Post-poning of our worldly Affairs, and the making of them subservient to the great End of our Creation.

Matt. 23. 23.

What our Saviour says to the Scribes and Pharisees about paying *Tithe of Mint, Anise and Cummin*, and omitting the weightier Matters of the Law, *Judgment, Mercy, and Faith*, may be very applicable for the closing up of this Head, and reprimanding our Scrupulosity and Concern for little Matters, when we disregard Affairs of the highest and most necessary Consequence; *These Things ought ye to have done, and not to have left the Others undone*: The great and moral Duties, which the *Finger of God* hath written, and the Law of Nature continually dictates, call for a precise and punctual Observance; but Things of bare Use, Convenience, or Expediency, may be transacted with an inferior Care, and should rather be *not neglected or forgotten*, than *anxiously* pursued, or *immoderately* enjoy'd.

FOURTHLY, I am to consider the Encomium, which our Saviour bestows in the Text, upon *Mary's* Wisdom and Prudence, for making Choice of that *One useful* and important Thing which *Martba* neglected: *Mary hath chosen the good*

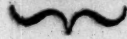
good Part. She hath consider'd that the Sermon Coming of our Saviour into the House, XX. was not so much for the Refreshment of his own Nature; as the strengthening and confirming of their Faith; and therefore she might reasonably think that she should better comply with the Design of his Visit, by heark'ning to his Doctrine, than waiting on his Person. We find her accordingly in the submissive Posture of a *Disciple, sitting at the Feet* of her great Master, and receiving with Reverence those *Oracles of Truth* which drop'd from his sacred Lips. An honourable Privilege, and a beneficial Service! A *Privilege*, which sinful *Dust and Ashes* were rarely admitted to, a *Service*, which must at present enlighten the Mind, and would in the End reward the Pains of her that served. If *Elizabeth* could cry out, *Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?* and the *Centurion* (though a Man in a creditable Post in the *Roman Army*) should think his *Roof* unworthy to receive such an extraordinary Person as our Saviour, and had rather that he should dispatch his Message by a second Hand, than put himself to the Trouble of a formal Visit: Certainly the House where these two *Sisters* dwelt, was highly favoured by the Presence of such a Guest, and all the Inhabitants must be wonderfully inlightned by his Seraphic Discourses. *Mary* was truly sensible of her present Happiness, and intent upon the Edification of her Soul. She sat with Patience, and was in-

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structed

Sermon

XX.



fructed in Meekness; heard with a joyful Heart, and obey'd with a willing Mind. She did not take the Word into her Soul, as the *strong Ground* in the *Parable* receiv'd the good Seed, and only threw up an hasty and sudden Stalk, which could not for want of Earth, endure the scorching Heat of the Sun; but must wither before it could fructify, and die before it could attain to any Maturity: But she learn'd in order to practise, and heard the Word that she might keep the Commandments. *Τὴν ἀγαθὴν μερίδα ἐξελέξατο*, *She hath chosen the good Portion*. Reason has mov'd, and Faith directed her: The Option was prudent, and the Benefit valuable; the Happiness satisfactory, and the Enjoyment lasting. O Mary, great was thy Faith, and blessed wast thou amongst Women! Blessed were those Ears, in which the Voice of the Heavenly Salutation sounded, and that Heart into which the Words of Truth and Salvation descended. Blessed wast thou who satest at thy Saviour's Feet; for thy Lot was fallen in a pleasant Land, and a goodly Heritage must crown thy Attention.

And this brings me to speak a Word or two concerning the last Particular of my Text, viz.

FIFTHLY, The Reason alledg'd for preferring Mary's Choice above Martha's; and this is taken from the lasting Nature of the Thing, which she had made Choice of: *The good Part shall not be taken from her.*

“ We

“ We generally make our Estimate of Sermon
 “ Things from their * Duration, and XX.
 “ measure their intrinsic Worth by their
 “ Permanency and Solidity. A *Ruby* or
 “ a *Sapphire* is preferable to a *Rose* or a
 “ *Lilly*; and *Gold* and *Silver*, to *Glass* and
 “ *Crystal*; because the former are substan-
 “ tial and lasting, and the latter brittle
 “ and fading.

Now, if we go by the same Rule in comparing the Things of this World with those of another, we shall soon know how to cast the Ballance, and where to fix the Pre-eminence. *The Fashion of this World passeth away*, and the Glories of it quickly dwindle and vanish. All earthly Things are upon the Ebb and Flow, and human Enjoyments are liable to Disasters, and subject to Decay. † *Divitiarum & formæ gloria, fluxa atque fragilis est: Virtus clara, æternaque habetur.* Honour is a Bubble, and Pleasure a Dream; Riches are fickle, and Beauty is fading: But *the Fear of the Lord endureth for ever*, and * Virtue extends her Possessions to another State. *Her Throne is everlasting, and of her Dominion there is no End.* She is seated above the Reach of Danger, and is secure from all the Storms and Insults of this barbarous World. Earthly Enjoyments may be subject to Casualties and Disasters, and the best-guarded Possessions may be spoil'd by Rapine and Inundations: But Virtue is impregnable, and her Treasures

* Barrow's Works, V. III. Ser. 4. p. 139.

† Sall. Bell. Catul.

• See Sermon. 31.

Sermon defy the Attacks of Fortune. She is not startled at foreign Captivity, nor afraid of domestic Chains: She is not dismay'd at the Incurſion of an Enemy, nor ſhock'd at the Death of a Friend: But ſhe manfully keeps her Ground, and conſcientiouſly maintains her Reſolutions; is ſedate and compos'd in the miſt of Adverſity, and expects her Reward in a better Kingdom.

O *Bleſſed, and thrice Happy* are they, who, by the Aſſiſtance of Virtue, act their Part well in this ſinful World, and carry their Eye beyond Morality! Bleſſed are they, who *put on Righteouſneſs for a Breafplate*, and the *Garments of Innocence for a Clothing*; who *provide Bags which wax not old*, to receive their Subſtance, and *adorn the inner Man with the goodly Habilitments of Quietneſs and Humility*.

II. 59. 17.

Luk. 12. 33.

Whereas the Titles of the Noble ſhall be eras'd, and the Veſtments of the Proud *Moth-eaten*; whereas the *Silver* of the *Miſer* ſhall be ruſted, and the Gold of the Oppreſſor canker'd; the Treafure of the Righteous ſhall be durable in Heaven, and neither *Moth*, nor Ruſt, nor Canker ſhall corrupt it, nor Thieves nor Ruſſians *break through to ſteal it away*.

What is it then, my beloved Brethren, that we *are*, or *can be* ſolicitous about, in this tranſitory World? Would we raiſe Eſtates, or purchaſe Renown? Alas! *What is a Name, when we are going into a Land where all Things are forgotten?* What are Eſtates, when we muſt be ſtrip'd of them in a Moment, and forc'd, with-

out

out their Assistance, to travel naked and defenceless into an unknown Country? Sermon
XX.

LASTLY, Would we live in Grandeur, and entertain with Magnificence? Would we court the Great, and feed the Noble? Why! Tho' we were as secure of as an honourable a Guest as we find at the *Table of Martha*, his Stay will be but short, and our Accommodations (for what we know) may be unacceptable. What is troublesome and expensive to ourselves, may not always be grateful and agreeable to others: Splendor and Superfluities may display the Vanity of the Entertainer, and at the same Time provoke the Envy and Disdain of the Visitant.

It is true, indeed, in the Instance before us, we have a Person condescending to visit *Two Sisters*, and declaring his Dislike of the sumptuous Preparation made by one of them to receive him, without any of the sinful Humour and disdainful Passion, which is incident to some haughty Visitants: And, I think, the best Instruction we can learn from this Dislike of our Saviour, is, That there may be a different, a more acceptable, a more lasting Reception of our Lord, than by banqueting and feasting. Tho' rich *Wines* and delicious *Fare* may not adorn the *Table*, nor the *Tabret and Pipe* give Sprightliness to the Solemnity; yet an inward and spiritual Joy may welcome the Divine Guest, and sanctify the Entertainment.

If it had been our Fortune to have been of our Saviour's Retinue and Ac-

Sermon acquaintance upon Earth; yet our visible

XX. Conversation could have remained no longer than his Continuance in the Flesh, and all the external Acts of this endearing Society must have ended with his speedy Departure out of this World: But the more lasting Communication, the more refreshing Intercourse, is of another Nature. There is still a Way of *spiritually receiving* our Lord into our Hearts, whereby we fix his Residence and Abode with us to all Eternity. *He that hath my Commandments (says our Saviour) and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be beloved of my Father, and I will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our Abode with him. O blessed Residence! O mysterious Inhabitation! Though our earthly Houses can no longer receive the Person of our Saviour, nor our Tables feed him; yet we may be fed with the Mysteries of his, and received into those Heavenly Houses, whose Duration is Eternal, and whose Joys are inexhaustible. Amen.*

John 14.
21, 23.

O God, who hast prepared for them that love thee such good Things as pass Man's Understanding; pour into our Hearts such Love towards thee, that we loving thee above all Things, may obtain thy Promises which exceed all that we can desire, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The

*The different Conduct of Christ
and the Baptist.*

IN THREE SERMONS.

Preached in the Time of *LENT*.

LUKE vii. 33, 34, 35.

*John the Baptist came neither eating
Bread, nor drinking Wine; and
ye say, He hath a Devil.*

*The Son of Man is come eating and
drinking; and ye say, Behold a
gluttonous Man, and a Wine-bib-
ber; a Friend of Publicans and
Sinners.*

*But Wisdom is justified of all her
Children.*

UPON the Fame of our Saviour's Sermon
Preaching, and the Frequency of XXI.
his Miracles, St. *John the Baptist* ~~~~~
*sent two of his Disciples to enquire into the
Truth of these Facts, and to be more ful-
ly satisfied of the Nature of Christ's Mis-
sion, and the Design of his Doctrine.*

Sermon For the Resolution of their Doubts,
 XXI. our Saviour appeals to his Works, and
 desires the *Messengers* might be convinc'd
 by the Testimony of their own Senses,
 and give a faithful Report to their Ma-
 ster of the Things which they had seen and
 heard, How that the Blind see, the lame
 walk, the Lepers are cleansed, the Deaf
 hear, the Dead are raised, and the Poor
 have the Gospel preached to them: All which
 carried their own Evidence and Convic-
 tion along with them; and were not only
 bare Proofs of the miraculous Appearance
 of an extraordinary Person, but precisely
 determin'd and fix'd down by the Pro-
 phet *Isaiah* to the Kingdom of the Me-
 ssiah.

After the *Messengers* of St. *John* were
 dismiss'd, our Saviour enters upon the
 Character of their Master, and from a
 Quotation out of the Prophet *Malachi*,
 informs the Audience of the Dignity of
 his present Office, and the great Worth
 and Sanctity of his Person. For, not-
 withstanding the wild Place of his Resi-
 dence, and the poor Condition of some
 of his Converts; notwithstanding the
 Meanness of his Apparel, and the Coarse-
 ness of his Diet; his Ignorance of a Court,
 and his Abhorrence of the Modes and Fa-
 shions of this World: Notwithstanding
 all this (I say) which might probably be
 objected against him by some of the pre-
 sent Spectators; our Saviour doth not
 stick to assert, That *John the Baptist* was
 much more than a Prophet, and that of all
 them

them who were born of Women, a greater Sermon
than He, never arofe.

XXI.

This Commendation of their Patron
and Instructor, was as agreeable to the
Publicans who had been baptised with the
Baptism of John, as it was distasteful to
the Pharisees and Lawyers, who despised
the Ministration of fo humble and mortifi-
fy'd a Man, and rejected the Counsel of God
againft themselves.

To the latter of these pragmatifal and
difdainful Persons, our blessed Lord di-
rects the Passages of the Text, plainly
intimating the Unwarrantableness of their
Cenfures, and the Impossibility of pleasing
their captious Tempers. *Whereunto* (says
he) *shall I liken the Men of this Generati-* v. 31.
on? And to what are they like? What Si-
mitude will fuit your Manners? Or from
whence shall I fetch a Comparifon to re-
present the Fickleness of your Tempers,
and the Folly of your Proceedings? Ye v. 32.
are like unto Children fitting in the Market-
place, and calling one to another, and faying,
We have piped unto you, and ye have not
danced: We have mourned to you, and ye
have not wept. Ye Pharisees, who pre-
tend to fo much Accurateness and Wif-
dom, act with as little Consideration in
your solemn Determinations, as Children
in their Games and Sports: For as they
are full of Complaints against their Com-
panions, for not following them in their
boyish Representations of their Mirth and
Sadness; fo ye are as ridiculous in your
Disgusts against the Doctrines of Truth,
and

Sermon and as humourfome in your Exceptions
XXI. againſt the Perſons who deliver them.

Neither the Importance of the Meſſage can convince, nor the Conduct of the Meſſengers pleaſe ; but Prejudice is always entring her Cavils, and Pride and Obſtinacy hardening you into Infidelity.

For John the Baptiſt came neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine ; and ye ſay, He bath a Devil. The Son of Man is come eating and drinking ; and ye ſay, Behold, a gluttonous Man, and a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners. But Wiſdom is juſtified of all her Children.

From theſe Words of the Evangelift, I ſhall take an Occaſion to do Five Things.

FIRST, To ſet before you the different Method of *Living* which is here aſcrib'd to our *Saviour* and *St. John*.

SECONDLY, To prove the Suitableneſs of this different Method of Life, as founded upon the different Characters which both theſe Perſons were to ſuſtain, and the various Parts they were to act upon Earth.

THIRDLY, To enquire into the Tempers and Diſpoſitions of thoſe Men, who were ſo buſy in cenſuring the Conduct of *Chriſt* and the *Baptiſt*, and to expoſe thoſe Vices which occaſion'd ſuch baſe and ſcandalous Reflections.

FOURTH-

FOURTHLY, To raise some useful Observations from the Variety of Conduct here mention'd, and the malicious Construction which the *Jews* put upon it.

FIFTHLY, To apply the whole to your Consciences in a few obvious and practical Inferences.

FIRST, I am to set before you that different Method of Living, which is here ascrib'd to our Saviour and St. *John*.

John the Baptist came neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine ! This was not an occasional or affected Way of Living, upon some stated and solemn Seasons; but the constant and regular Course of his Life, without any Interruption from a Festival, or the least Indulgence of the Appetite upon any joyful Solemnity. As his Birth was surprizing, and his Mission uncommon, so his Education was of the same extraordinary Stamp, and the whole Method of his Deportment miraculous. He was dedicated from his Infancy to Solitude, and hurried from the Cradle into the Wilderness: *Here he continued till the Day of his shewing unto Israel, and so manag'd and disciplin'd both his Back and his Belly, that the One was inur'd to all the Roughness of Cloathing, and the Other knew little more than the Scarcity and Coarseness of Diet: For the same John had his Raiment of Camels Hair, and*

Luke 1.
80.

Matt. iii. 4.

Sermon *a leathern Girdle about his Loins; and his*
 XXI. *Meat was Locusts and Wild-honey.* In this
 squalid and penurious Condition, and under these Circumstances of Self-denial and Abstinence, he preached Repentance, received Converts, and administered Baptism, and proclaimed the Appearance of the Messiah.

But on the contrary, *The Son of Man*, or the Messiah himself, came *Eating and Drinking*: That is, His Course of Life was free and open, His Conversation was general, his Company promiscuous, and his *Meat and Drink* of the same Kind with other Mens. There were no Particularities in his Habits or Gestures, and nothing which look'd like Reservedness or Affectation in his Speech or Manners.

Not, but that our Saviour was *Sober and Temperate* in the most eminent Degree, and did, upon some urgent Occasions, carry the Rigours and Austerities of Fasting and Mortification, to an higher Pitch than the *Baptist* possibly could do. But still the general Tenour of his Life was of a different Nature: He was bred and educated like other Persons; liv'd with his reputed Parents, and follow'd the Occupation of *Joseph*: He convers'd openly, paid Visits, solemnized Marriages, frequented public Assemblies, attacked the *Scribes*, *disputed with the Doctors*, observed the *Feasts* of his Country, and associated himself with the Collectors of the Revenue. This Frankness and Impartiality disgusted the Zeal of *Puritans*, and

provoked the Indignation of the Super-
cilious *Pharisees*; and all that our Saviour's
Good-nature and Charity could procure
from their Mouths, was no more, than
the scurrilous and reproachful Names of
Glutton and *Sot*, Patron of Debauchery,
and *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*.

But notwithstanding this Malice and
Injustice, this degrading and ignominious
Language; I hope, in the

SECOND Place, to prove the Con-
venience and Suitableness of the different
Behaviour of *Christ* and *St. John*, as
founded upon the different Characters
which these two Persons were to sustain,
and the various Parts they were to act
upon Earth. *St. John's* Abode was to be
short, and his Ministry confin'd; but our
Saviour was to take a larger Compass, and
to hang out a more glorious and com-
manding Light. *St. John's* Preaching
was restrained to Repentance, and him-
self was only the Prophet and Harbinger
of succeeding Glory; but our *Saviour*
was the *Light of the World* and the Life
of the Faithful, the Completion of Hap-
piness and the Introducer of Heaven up-
on Earth. *I am not the Christ* (says the John iii. 28.
Baptist) *but am sent before him*: I must
appear as an humble Servant, but he as
a triumphant Master. My Business is to
exalt the Valleys, and depress the *Mount-*
tains; to *streighten the Paths*, and level
the *Ways*, for the more august Entrance
of the *King of Glory*, and the better Esta-
blishment

Sermon blishment of his Kingdom, and the larger
XXI. Extension of his Victories and Triumphs:

If we, therefore, take the *Coming of the Son of Man* in the Text, to denote his first Appearance upon Earth; see, see with what State and Magnificence the Redeemer of Israel approaches his Dominions! His Birth is usher'd in with joyful Signs and pompous Acclamations: *The Kings of Arabia and Saba bring Gifts;* and the Stars conduct Foreigners into his Presence. *Abraham rejoices to see the Day;* and the Choir of *Angels* descend to celebrate the *Nativity*. The celestial Harps sound the good Tidings of great Joy to all People, and the Tongues of Seraphims sing the chearful Anthem of Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth Peace, Good-Will towards Men.

If we follow this Prince of Peace and Glory, through some other Stages of Life upon Earth, we shall find nothing but the Redemption of Israel concerted, and the Salvation of Soul and Body negotiated. Diseases are cur'd, and Devils expell'd; the Dumb speak, and the Deaf hear; the Afflicted sing, and the Lame dance. Upon these pleasing Topicks, the Prophets break out into the most poetical Raptures, and describe the Reign of their Messiah in the highest Strains of Metaphor and Oratory: *Comfort ye, Comfort ye, my People: Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her Warfare is accomplished, and that her Iniquity is pardoned. O Zion, that bringest good Tidings;*

Is. 40. 1, 2,
9.

Tidings, get thee up into the high Mountain: Sermon
O Jerusalem, that bringest good Tidings, lift **XXI.**
up thy Voice with Strength, for the Ransom-

ed of the Lord shall return, and come to
Zion, with Songs and everlasting Joy up-
on their Heads: They shall obtain Joy and
Gladness, and Sorrow and Sighing shall flee
away. The Wilderness and solitary Place
shall be glad for them; and the Desert shall
rejoice, and blossom as the Rose. It shall
blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with
Joy and Singing; the Glory of Lebanon shall
be given unto it, the Excellency of Carmel
and Sbaron. They shall see the Glory of
the Lord, and the Excellency of our God.

Well therefore might St. John the
Baptist give Testimony to those joyful
Times of Refreshment, and allow so vast a
Preference and Superiority to the Captain
of our Salvation, by humbling himself, and
magnifying his great Master. He must John iii. 30,
increase, but I must decrease. He that co-
meth from above, is above all: He that is
of the Earth, is earthly, and speaketh of
the Earth. I indeed baptize you with Wa-
ter unto Repentance, but he that cometh af-
ter me is mightier than I, whose Shoes I am
not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you
with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire.

From this Confession of the Baptist
concerning Christ Jesus and himself, and
the Tenour and Design of both their Doc-
trines; from the pompous Descriptions
in the Prophets of the joyful Times of
the Messiah, and the general View of
propagating the Christian Faith to all
Nati-

Sermon
XXI.

Nations; we may see the Difference between a *public* and a *private* Character, between a *Master* and a *Servant*; and may account for the open and generous Behaviour of *our Lord*, as well as the Abstinence and Retirement of the *Baptist*. This Difference was visible enough to the Jews, and the Distinction too plain to admit of the Cavils and Exceptions in the Text.

THIRDLY Then, Let us look a little more narrowly into the Tempers and Dispositions of those Men who were so busy in censuring the Conduct of *Christ* and the *Baptist*, and let us expose those Vices which occasioned such base and scandalous Reflections.

For our better Information in this Point, we need only cast our Eye upon the 30th Verse of the viith Chapter of *St. Luke's Gospel*, where we shall find the Ridiculers of our *Saviour* and the *Baptist* to be the *Pharisees* and the *Lawyers*, and their Crime stigmatiz'd, by their *rejecting the Counsel of God against themselves*.

It is observable from all the *Evangelists*, that the *Multitude* resorted to our *Saviour*, and the common *People* heard him gladly: That the *Publicans* and *Sinners* obey'd the Summons to Repentance, and the Poor and Needy were the most attentive Auditors of the Gospel: But *not many Wise Men after the Flesh*, *not many Mighty*, *not many Rich*, *not many Noble* were called. The leading Part of the *Jewish Nation*

conti-

continued faithless and incorrigible: *The Sermon Rulers and Teachers in Israel* would not strike in with the Sentiments of the *Vulgar*: *The Rabbins and Doctors* were too *Wise* to Learn; the *Pharisees and Lawyers* too *Holy* to need any *Repentance*. They all rejected the *Counsel of God*: They all refus'd those Methods of Salvation which our Heavenly Father in his infinite Wisdom had ordain'd; and as vigorously oppos'd the Preaching of the *Baptist*, as they maliciously undervalued the Merits of a Redeemer.

If, therefore, we would take a more distinct Survey of these Contemners of Christ, and Scoffers at Christianity, we must pursue their Actions thro' the several Scenes of *Pride, Prejudice, Malice, and Obstinacy*; those fatal Obstacles of a saving Faith, and mischievous Causes of Infidelity!

1st, The *Pride* of the *Pharisees* occasion'd their Rejection of Christ, and the ill Construction of his Actions.

Pharisaical Pride (as far as relates to our present Purpose) was an high Conceit of themselves, and a disdainful Opinion of others: Under this Notion, our Saviour blames the *Pharisees* for the *Broadness* of their *Phylacteries*, and the *Length* of the *Garments*; for the *Ostentation* of their *Prayers*, and the *Hypocrisy* of their *Fasts*: And St. *Luke* gives us a surfeiting Instance of their Spiritual Pride, in the Example of a *Pharisee* and a *Publican*, who went up into the Temple to pray. The

Sermon

XXI.

Luke xviii.

10, 11, 12,

13.

Publican being conscious of his own Guilt, would not lift up so much as his Eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his Breast, saying, God, be merciful unto me a Sinner: But the *Pharisee* gloried in his Fasting twice in the Week, and paying Tithes of all he possessed; and thank'd God that he was not as other Men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this *Publican*. The Man (you see) is full of his own Excellencies, and triumphs in the Merits of his Works, and seems to speak with that Air of Confidence, as if Heaven were under Obligations to him, and God himself were a Gainer by his Devotions.

Now that this Instance of Pride and Ostentation was not only peculiar to the *Pharisee* here mention'd, but common to the whole Sect, will appear from their haughty Treatment of the Person whom our Saviour had cured of a natural Blindness: For the *Pharisees* reviled him, and said, *Thou wast altogether born in Sin, and dost thou teach us? Thou art the Disciple of an Impostor, but we are Moses's Disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: As for this Fellow, we know not from whence he is.*

From these Accounts, you may see the Process of a *Pharisaical* Pride, and the great Distance it must keep the Bigots of that Sect from embracing the Gospel: For Christianity is a mortifying and self-denying Doctrine, a Doctrine founded upon the Contempt of worldly Grandeur and Arrogance, a Doctrine recommended

commended by the Example of its *Meek and Lowly* Legislator, and enforc'd by the unanimous Practice of his patient and suffering Disciples. *Except ye be converted* (says our Saviour) *and become as little*

Sermon
XXI.

Matt. xviii.

Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. For whosoever will be great among you, let him be your Minister: And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your Servant. But how could the Lordly Temper of a Pharisee submit to these

Ch. xx. 26,
27.

fervile Offices of a Christian? How could the uppermost Seats in the Synagogues stoop to the Washing of the Feet of Pilgrims? How could the Love of Greetings in the Market, and the Affectation of being called *Rabbi, Rabbi*, take up with the Infamy of the Cross, and triumph in the most scurrilous and barbarous Treatment?

2dly, Let us consider the *Prejudices* of the *Pharisees* against Christ and his Doctrine.

The *Pharisees* had entertain'd such a Set of Notions concerning the Messiah, as were no ways suitable to the Life and Actions of the *Blessed Jesus*; and till these *Præ-possession*s were remov'd, and the Entertainers of them brought to a more candid and ingenuous Temper; it was impossible that they should embrace Truth, and give themselves up to Conviction.

If they were confronted with any *Prophecies* about the Birth, the Appearance, and Country of the Messiah, and press'd with the strongest Arguments that *Jesus* must be the Person *who was to come*, and

Sermon that they could not look for another: Then

XXI. Prejudice would immediately cry out,
Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Search,
 John vii. 41,
 52. *and look: For out of Galilee ariseth no Prophet.*

Matt. xiii.
 54, 55, 56

If his *Preaching* were commended, and the ravish'd Audience declar'd, *That never Man spake as this Man speaketh*; the Bigots of the *Pharisaical Party* would presently be raising of Doubts, and asking of Questions? *Whence hath this Man Wisdom, and who is the Gamaliel that instructed him? Is not this the Carpenter's Son? Is not his Mother called Mary? And his Brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his Sisters, are they not all with us? Doth not the Meanness of his Birth shew him an Impostor, and the Infamy of his Kindred confute his Pretences to the Messiahship?*

Jo in vii. 16,
 16, 24.

Lastly, If his Miracles were so plain and overbearing, as to leave no Room for Exception, the *Pharisees* would maintain their Prejudices by the sole Dint of Authority, and silence the Vulgar by the terrible Engine of Excommunication. *This Man (say they) is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day. Give God the Praise: We know that this Man is a Sinner. His Mission is false, and all his Pretensions Juggle and Cheat: Sorcery and Witch-craft are discernable in all his Actions, and he casteth out Devils by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils.*

Matt. xii.
 24.

So strong were the Prejudices! So rivetted and inveterate the Opinions of the Scribes

Scribes and Pharisees ! And yet the Re-
pute of Sanctity, and the Renown for
Wisdom was so great, of these prejudic'd
Persons, that their Infidelity was gene-
rally applauded, and the Faith of others
condemned for Easiness and Credulity.

*Have any of the Rulers, or of the Phari-
sees believed on him? But this People who
knoweth not the Law, are cursed.*

John vi. 48.

49.

3dly, The next Vice which instigated
the *Pharisees* to Infidelity, was *Malice*.

There is nothing which the *Scribes and
Pharisees* had a greater Opinion of, than
their own Knowledge; and upon this ve-
ry Principle they stand self-condemned
and inexcusable in their Actions. *If ye
were blind* (says our Saviour) *ye would
have no Sin; but now ye say, we see; there-
fore your Sin remaineth.* Ye have forfeit-
ed the Plea of Ignorance, and own'd your
Proceedings the voluntary Effect of Spite
and Rancour: Your Malice is a Bar a-
gainst Conviction, and cuts off the very
Possibility of Repentance.

John ix. 41.

It would be endless to run into a Com-
mon-Place concerning the Malice of the
Pharisees; but in Reference to our Sa-
viour Christ (for which Reason we have
now mentioned it) you will find it furi-
ous and ungovernable, sanguinary and
implacable: It perverted his Words, and
censur'd his Intentions; it traduc'd his
Life, and oppos'd his Miracles; misre-
presented his Charity, and spurn'd at his
Preaching: It suborn'd *Witnesses* at his
Trial, and brib'd the *Soldiers* at his Re-
surrection;

Sermon surrection; petition'd for Murder in Opposition to Innocence, and bound the *Curse of Blood* upon the *Jews* and *their Children*.

4thly, The last Crime of the *Pharisees*, was their *Obstinacy*. This was the Cement and Union of all the Rest, and what kept their *Pride*, their *Prejudice*, and *Malice* so closely compacted together. 'Twas *Obstinacy* which augmented the *Malignity* of every Fact, which provok'd the *Repetition* of Villany, and loaded the Agents with all the heightening Circumstances and Aggravations of Guilt. *What could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it?* What farther Tenders could be made to a perverse People? What greater *Sacrifice* offer'd for Sin? But alas! the Zeal of God's People is hardened into *Infidelity*: *Contradicting* and *Blaspheming* is their daily Exercise: Their *Controversy* is with their Redeemer, and their *Fighting* against Heaven.

Is. v. 4.

Look therefore upon the Christian Doctrine of *Faith* and *Repentance*, and tell me, What is then to be hop'd for from those who never make a *Proselyte*, but with a malicious Intention of making him twofold more the Child of Hell than themselves. Preach Compassion to a Rock, and impart Softness to the Nether Mill-Stone: And then ye may conclude, that the *Ethiopian* may change his Skin, and the *Leopard* his Spots, and those who are accustomed to do Evil, may learn to do Good: Then, then indeed, ye may expect Relentings

lentings from the stiff-necked and obdurate Generation of *Pharisees*, and that the proud *Rabbi* should descend from the State of *Moses's Chair*, and with Tears and Compunction be an humble Auditor at the Feet of the despis'd *Galilean*.

Thus, my Brethren, I have run through the Obstacles which the Gospel met with from the *Scribes and Pharisees*, and represented to you the Cause which actuated the Zeal of Bigots: I have look'd into the Principles which fix'd such an ill-natur'd Construction upon the Actions of our Heavenly Master, and expos'd the Vices which procur'd such barbarous Treatment both to Himself and his Followers.

And as we are at this solemn Season under the Discipline of Penance and Mortification, and are enter'd upon stricter Vows of Repentance and Amendment of Life, I thought it proper to lay open *the Mystery of Iniquity*, that we might not be prejudic'd in our Lusts, tenacious of our Errors, wavering in our Principles, and incorrigible in our Tempers.

God grant, that all of us *who name the Name of Christ*, may be exemplary in our Lives, candid in our Behaviour, modest in our Censures, firm in our Obedience, and zealous in our Conformity.

Grant, O Meek and humble Jesus, that we thy Servants, *being stedfast in Faith, joyful through Hope, and rooted in Charity,* Office of Bapt. *may crucifie the old Man with the Affections and Lusts, and utterly abolish the whole Bo-*

Sermon *dy of Sin; and may so pass through the*
XXI. *Waves of this troublesome World, that finally we may come to the Land of Everlasting Life; there to be Inberitors of thy Glory, and to reign with thee, and the Residue of thy Church; World without End. Amen.*

SERMON

SERMON XXII.

LUKE vii. 33, 34, 35,

John the Baptist came neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine ; and ye say, He hath a Devil.

The Son of Man is come eating and drinking ; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous Man, and a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners.

But Wisdom is justified of all her Children.

AS the due Observance of *Lent* has Sermon been scandalously neglected in XXII. these later Ages, and the solemn Duties of Repentance either slightly perform'd or totally omitted ; so it is not to be doubted, but the Licentiousness of the *Press*, and the Insolence of *Deists* and *Free-thinkers*, have not contributed a little to these Neglects and Profanations. We have been so much amused with *Liberty and Property*, as to forget the Obligation and Confinement of Religion. We have run into such extravagant Notions of our *English Birth-right*, as to forfeit our Subjection and Dependance on our God : And we have asserted in such high-

Sermon high-flown Terms our Privileges by Na-
 XXII. *ture*, as to cancel the Doctrines of *Grace*,
 and render of *none Effect* the Dispensations of the *Gospel*.

In the midst of this Torrent of Impiety, I cannot be so partial as to deny, that some good Laws have been enacted for the Suppression of Vice, and the Encouragement of Virtue: But the Execution has been too languid to retard the Progress of Infidelity, and the Interest of Vice so prevalent, as to defeat the pious Intentions of our Legislators. Let the Law threaten, and the Judges Storm; let the Civil Power brandish her Sword, and the Church thunder out her *Anathemas*; yet Lust will always mutiny under Confinement, Pride will hector in Defence of corrupted Nature, and Envy gnash at those Precepts which would curb her Pretensions, and reduce her Tyranny. Vice is querulous and uneasy, petulant and boisterous: She continually finds some Handle to upbraid Virtue, and will catch Hold of the most innocent Liberties to perplex the Scrupulous, and scandalize the *weaker Christians*.

Whether we *Sleep*, or whether we *Wake*: Our *Rest* is Drowsiness, and our *Vigilance* Design.

Whether we *Eat*, or whether we *Abstain*: Our *Indulgence* is Gluttony, and our *Forbearance* Pride.

Whether we *Sing*, or whether we *Mourn*: Our *Mirth* is frothy, and our *Sorrow* counterfeit.

Whether

of Christ and the Baptist.

411

Whether we *Pray*, or whether we give *Sermon*
Thanks: The Devil is suppos'd to be still **XXII.**
in our Hearts, and all our different Acti-
ons are instigated by his Subtilty and Per-
suasion.

Thus when *John the Baptist* came nei-
ther *Eating Bread*, nor *Drinking Wine*;
Ye say that he hath a Devil.

When the *Son of Man* came *Eating and*
Drinking; *Ye say, Behold, a gluttonous*
Man, and a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Pub-
licans and Sinners.

But Wisdom is justified of all her Children,
For the better Understanding and En-
forcement of these Words, I made the
following Proposals to you, in my last
Discourse.

FIRST, To set before you the dif-
ferent Method of *Living* which is
here ascribed to our *Saviour* and *St.*
John.

SECONDLY, To prove the Suita-
bleness of this different *Method of*
Life, as founded upon the different
Characters which both these Persons
were to sustain, and the various Parts
they were to act upon Earth.

THIRDLY, To enquire into the
Tempers and Dispositions of those
Men, who were so busy in Censuring
the Conduct of *Christ* and the *Bap-*
tist, and to expose those Vices which
occasioned such base and scandalous
Reflections.

FOURTH-

The Different Conduct

FOURTHLY, To raise some useful Observations from the Variety of Conduct here mentioned, and the malicious Construction which the *Jews* put upon it.

FIFTHLY, To apply all to your Consciences, in a few obvious and practical Inferences.

The *Three* former of these Particulars I have sufficiently handled in my last Discourse; and I shall now trespass upon your Patience, whilst I apply myself in the

FOURTH Place, To raise some useful Observations from the Variety of Conduct mention'd in the Text; and the malicious Construction which the *Jews* put upon it.

FIRST, I observe the Lawfulness of an abstemious and reserv'd, as well as of a more free and open, Behaviour; and the proper Use to be made both of *Feasting* and *Penance*, at different Times, and upon different Occasions.

SECONDLY, The Necessity we may all lie under through the Course of our Lives, of *Indulging* or *Abstaining*, of attending *Festivals*, or submitting to *Mortification*.

THIRDLY,

THIRDLY, The Difficulty of pleasing all People in these and such-like Instances of our common Deportment.

FOURTHLY, The Censures we must probably undergo in the lawful Use of our *Christian Liberty*.

FIFTHLY, The heightning Circumstances of an Abuse which are here conveyed to us under the opprobrious Names of a *Devil*, a *gluttonous Man*, a *Wine-bibber*, a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*.

SIXTHLY, The disingenuous and uncharitable Temper of those Persons who judge only by the *outward Appearance*, and are so positive and dogmatical in pronouncing *indifferent Things*, odious and criminal.

SEVENTHLY, That this malicious Treatment which was design'd to *destroy*, is frequently the Occasion of *supporting Truth*; *Wisdom is justified of all her Children*.

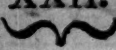
FIRST, I collect from the Text the Lawfulness of an abstemious and reserv'd, as well as of a more free and open, Behaviour; and the proper Use to be made both of Feasting and Pennance, at different Times, and upon different Occasions.

I would

Sermon XXII. I would not, by any Means, from the Example of our Saviour, infer the perpetual Obligation of *Eating* and *Drinking*, or from the Abstinence of St. *John*, recommend the constant Practice of Retirement and Pennance ; because this Way of Arguing would not only tend to the Destruction of human Nature, but must also vacate some of the most important Precepts of Religion and Morality. *Feasting* and *Mortification* may, in some Sense, be styl'd *Indifferent Things*, and are very properly to be reckon'd amongst the *Occasional* Duties of Christianity. The Rules of Prudence and Conveniency must interpose in their Use and Application : The Constitution of our Bodies and Minds must be duly weigh'd ; and the Commands of our Superiours, and the Good of the Community, are to determine our Assent in the Exercise of such Duties. Time and Place have a great Power towards the Comeliness and Decency of most Actions : And the Custom of our particular Country, and the Practice of the Neighbourhood where we live, must justify our Conformity, where neither *Divine* nor *Human* Laws have laid their contrary Restraints upon us. Thus *Solomon* hath inform'd us, that to every Thing there is a Season, and a Time to every Purpose under Heaven : A Time to be born, and a Time to die : A Time to embrace, and a Time to refrain from embracing : A Time to weep, and a Time to laugh : A Time to mourn, and a Time to dance.

Ecc. iii. 1,
2, 4, 5.

As

As to the particular *Times* and Lawful-Sermon
ness of *Feasting*, the Practice of the Pa-XXII.
triarchs and good Men before the Law; 
the Institutions of God by the Mouth of
Moses, and the sanctifying of *Months and*
Days; the Proclaiming of *Jubilees* and
Passovers, and the several Processions and
solemn Appearances of the Israelites, are
too evident and glaring Proofs to be de-
ny'd or contradicted by the most reserv'd
and *Cynical* Person. Certainly, he must
be a *Stranger in Israel*, who is unacquaint-
ed with the *Sound of the Trumpet on the*
New Moons, and the merry *Tabret and*
Harp upon the *solemn Feast-Days*. Cer-
tainly, He must have neither *Eyes* nor
Ears, who has not seen the *Fatlings* bleed,
and the *Altars* smoak; Who has not
heard the *young Men* Singing, and beheld
the *Virgins* Dancing: *This was ordain'd*
for a Law in Jacob, and a Statute in Is-
rael: A Feast is made for Laughter, and
Wine maketh Merry. Bread is to strengthen
Man's Heart, and Oyl to make his Face
to shine.

Ecc. x. 19.
1st. civ. 15.

Under the *New Testament*, our Saviour
conform'd to these joyful Institutions of
the Law and the Usages of his Country-
men, and was so far from abrogating old
Festivals, that he comply'd with the Ce-
lebration of several New Ones, which the
sole Authority of Men had introduc'd in
later Ages, for the Commemoration of
fresh Benefits to the *Jewish* Nation.

This Argument might be farther pro-
secuted, and Mirth and Festivity justified,
did

Sermon did not the Offices of our Church, at this XXII. Time, more call our Attention to the Rigours of a *Lent*, than the Gaieties of an *Easter* or a *Pentecost*: When these Festivals approach, we may *anoint our Head with Oil*, and *exchange the Spirit of Heaviness for the Garment of Praise*. But at present we must be contented to be *girded with Sack-cloth*, and to *wallow in Ashes*; and either to abstain totally from the Diversions of this World, or to *moisten our Bread with Weeping*, and *mingles our Cup with Tears*.

No Man, I presume, can doubt of the Lawfulness of these mortifying Practices, who compares some Passages of our Saviour's future Life, with the present Deportment of St. *John*. For though the Text mentions an Opposition between the *Eating* of the One and the *Abstemiousness* of the Other; yet this chiefly relates to the more general Circumstances of Life, and does not hinder an occasional Conformity between them in the Progress and Discharge of their Ministry. What Reasons may be produc'd for this different Way of Behaviour has been the Subject of a former Enquiry: But lest any Difficulty should rest on your Minds, and the *Eating and Drinking of the Son of Man* in the Text should still seem repugnant to his own mortifying Example and Doctrine in other Places of Scripture, and more especially to that eminent *Fast of Forty Days and Forty Nights* which we now commemorate and faintly imitate;
I shall

I shall endeavour to take off the Difficulty, Sermon
and to justify the Variety of Practice from **XXII.**
his own remarkable Words: When the
Scribes and Pharisees murmur'd against his
Disciples for the Freedoms they took with
Publicans and Sinners, and said unto him,
Why do the Disciples of John fast often, and
make Prayers, and likewise the Disciples of
the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?
Jesus said unto them, Can ye make the Chil-
dren of the Bride-chamber fast, while the
Bridegroom is with them? But the Days
will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken
from them, then shall they fast.

Luke v. 6.
30. 33. 34.
35.

The Purport of this Passage is, "That
" there are proper and distinct Seasons
" for most Actions, and our own Neces-
" sities must prescribe the Measure, and
" Prudence direct us in the Exercise of
" them. What is strictly lawful may not
" be always expedient; and what is some-
" times a Duty, may at other times be
" an Affront. Abstinence at a Wedding,
" is as great a Contradiction as Laughter
" at a Funeral. The Bridegroom may
" be soon brought to his Sables, and the
" Widow throw off her Weeds; but let
" not the Solemnity of a Wedding be
" damp'd, and the House of Mourning
" turn'd into Dancing and Ridicule.
" Laughter and Sorrow are equally law-
" ful; but the Use of both must be dis-
" cretional, and the Action well-tim'd
" and duly circumstantiated, or else the
" Agent will be expos'd, and his Con-
" duct become ridiculous."

E c

From

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XXII.

From what has been said, I hope our Saviour is reconcileable with himself, and his present *Eating* and *Drinking* is no ways contradictory to his future Abstinence, and frequent Injunctions of Self-denial and Mortification.

SECONDLY, I am to consider the Necessity we may all lie under, thro' the Course of our Lives, of *Indulging* or *Abstaining*; of attending *Festivals*, or submitting to *Penance*. The Favours of God are given for Enjoyment, and Appetites and Passions are form'd, that they may be lawfully and moderately indulged. *Arise, Slay, and Eat*, is sometimes the Voice of Heaven, as well as the Desire of the *Epicure*, and the Cry of the *Sensualist*. Covetousness is no ways consistent with a great Mind, or a large Purse; and a stingy Reserve of what was liberally given, is an Affront to Providence, and an Abuse of God's Creatures. *When we have Eaten and are full*, we should bless the Munificence of Heaven, and speak well of the *Land flowing with Milk and Honey*. A merry Heart and joyful Lips, a smiling Countenance and a grateful Tongue, have their Uses in Religion as well as Society, and may be as acceptable to God, as they are beneficial to our Neighbours.

But there is a Time for all Things: And we must not now (as I hinted before) indulge these pleasing Thoughts; nor give a Loose to our Imaginations, when we are upon the *Bed of Heaviness*, and under the Rigour

Rigour and Discipline of Penance. *The Sermon*
Bridegroom is taken from us, and we must XXII.
fast; and if we would do it according to
his Example, and would obtain the Ends
 which the Institution aims at, our Humi-
 liation must be attended with Bodily Se-
 verity, Internal Sorrow, Ardent Prayer,
 Religious Retirement, the Avoidance of
 Show, and the Exercise of Charity.

First, Fasting is to be attended with
 some Severity to the Body. Not, I pre-
 sume, that there is any inherent Virtue in
 Whippings and Scourges, or any Merit in
 tedious Journeys and foreign Pilgrimages;
 but the mortifying of the Flesh may re-
 vive the Spirit, and the Depression of the
 Body exalt the Mind and invigorate our
 Faith. No Man can be obliged to starve
 himself for the sake of Religion, or to ex-
 pect Martyrdom by the Assistance of Self-
 murder: Yet the curbing of the Appetite
 is both Physick and Devotion, and the
 Crucifying of the Flesh with the Affections
 and Lusts, is the very Essence of Christia-
 nity, and the Perfection of a Believer.
 As the Pleasure of Sin proceeds from a
 fond Indulgence of the animal and brutish
 Part of us; so Grace will flourish by the
 Suppression of corrupted Nature, and the
 Growth of Religion is principally to be
 ascrib'd to a regular Management of the
 Body. Would you preserve your House,
 quench the Flame, and withdraw the
 Fewel. Would you take the Town, an-
 noy the Enemy within, and cut off fresh
 Succours from without. *Strait is the Gate,*

Sermon and narrow is the Way that leadeth to
 XXII. Life: Many are the Provocations to Vice,
 and slender the Guard of Virtue. Where-
 fore I mortify my Members which are upon
 Earth, and keep under my Body, and bring
 it into Subjection, lest that by any Means
 when I have preached to others, I myself
 should be a Cast-away. For ye are not
 Debtors, Brethren, to the Flesh, to live after
 the Flesh: For if ye live after the Flesh, ye
 shall die; but if ye thro' the Spirit do mortify
 the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.

Coloss. iii.

1.

1 Cor. ix.

27.

Rom. viii.

12. 13.

Secondly, The Affliction of the Mind,
 as well as the Punishment of the Body, is
 a necessary Ingredient of Fasting. A true
 Penitential Sorrow lies deep and heavy,
 and spreads a Melancholy and Dejection
 thro' all the secret Apartments of the In-
 ward Man. Guilt and Remorse corrode
 on the Conscience, and the Floods of
 the Eyes are discharg'd from the Foun-
 tain of the Heart. Why art thou so ex-
 ceeding heavy, O my Soul? Why art thou
 so disquieted within me. Why? Alas! But
 for the Terrors of the Lord, which do set
 themselves in Array against me, and the Poi-
 son of the Almighty's Arrows which drink
 up my Spirits! Thou writest bitter Things
 against me, and makest me to possess the Sins
 of my Youth. Under this State of Anguish
 and Dereliction, How hideous is the
 Shape of Sin! How averse the Counte-
 nance of Virtue! What Relentings arise
 for lost Opportunities, and what Remorse
 for contemn'd Favours! Will the Lord
 absent himself for ever, and will he be no
 more

Job v. 4.

Psalm lxxvii.

7. 9.

more intreated? Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and will he shut up his Loving Kindness in Displeasure? Cannot Sorrow and Obedience pacify his Wrath, and a Broken Heart and a contrite Spirit intercede for my Pardon?

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Thirdly, Prayer is another great Attendant upon Fasting. For as the Mind suffers by her Union with the Body, and is damp'd and cloy'd in her Religious Enterprizes by the Curbs and Restraints of Flesh and Blood; so it is necessary that all Impediments should be removed for the freer Use of Contemplation, and the more boundless Flights of Devotion. We know the Prospect of the *Inward Man* is darkened by Fumes and Vapours, and that Drunkenness and Gluttony bring Laziness and Stupidity upon all the sprightly Faculties of the Soul. But Fasting and Abstinence dissipate the Fogs, and introduce a most glorious Light through the Regions of Sin and Darknes. When the Bodily Encumbrances are remov'd, and Riot and Wantonness cease; the Soul grows quick in her Perceptions, ardent in her Desires, constant in her Pursuits, and importunate in her Addresses. There is no longer any Numbness or Lethargy in her spiritual Exercises, no longer any Coldness in the Heart, or Interruption from the *Friend* or the *Bottle*; but the momentous Affairs of another World are transacted with Vigour and Assiduity, and *Heaven itself is taken by the Violence and Ardor of Devotion.*

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Fourthly, Retirement should be a Concomitant of Fasting: For the Soul at this Time being wholly to be given unto Prayer, should avoid all Diversions and Hindrances, and appear no more openly, than the Public Service of the Church, and the general Offices of Religion, require: For the Remainder of the Day, she must be sedate and reserv'd, and sequester herself as much as possible from the Hurry and Distraction of Worldly Business. Our Saviour himself resorted to solitary Places for the more convenient and vigorous Exercise of Devotion, and made Choice of a Mountain for the Performance of that most solemn and eminent Fast of Forty Days and Forty Nights: His Advice to us upon the same Occasion, is, To enter into our Closet when we fast, and to shut the Door, and to pray unto our Father which is in secret, and our Father which seeth in secret, shall reward us openly. Solitude will compose our Thoughts, and Secrecy dispel and banish Cares: Sincerity will procure a joyful Admission, and Faithfulness qualify us for the Almighty's Favour.

Fifthly, A farther Argument for Retirement in Fasting, is, the Avoidance of Ostentation. Rather than to pray standing in the Corners of the Street, and to disfigure our Faces to be seen of Men, our Saviour has introduc'd the washing of our Countenances, and the anointing of our Heads with Oil, into the Offices of Fasting: For by this Means Hypocrisy will be avoided, and

and true Humility encourag'd; the outward Act will be disguised, and the internal Sorrow appear to an Omniscient God. 'Tis our Hearts are to be rent, and not our Garments; 'tis Sin is to be mortify'd, and Pride humbled, and not our Head bow'd down like a Bulrush, and our Bodies disorder'd by an artificial and feigned Dress.

Sixthly and Lastly, To compleat our Fasting, it must be attended with Charity. We must abstain ourselves to oblige others: We must retrench the Superfluities of our Table, and put off the Excess of Apparel, that we may give Bread to the Hungry, and Cloathing to the Naked.

All that I have inculcated to you before, concerning Sorrow, Penance, Prayer, and Retirement, can be of but little Efficacy, in the Judgment of *Isaiab*, towards the Celebration of a true Fast, without the Assistance of Charity. Is it such a Fast that I have chosen? A Day for a Man to afflict his Soul? Is it to bow down his Head as a Bulrush, and to spread Sackcloth and Ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a Fast, and an acceptable Day to the Lord? Are the Postures of the Body an Index of the Mind? And Pageantry and Ostentation, the real Fruits of substantial Piety? Is not this the Fast that I have chosen? To loose the Bands of Wickedness, to undo the heavy Burdens, and to let the Oppressed go free, and that ye break every Yoke? Is it not to deal thy Bread to the Hungry, and that thou bring the Poor that

Sermon
XXII.

Isa. lviii. 5.

ver. 6, 7.

Sermon are cast out, to thy House? When thou seest
 XXII. the Naked, that thou cover him, and that
 ~~~~~ thou hide not thy self from thine own Flesh.

Such Fasting is grounded upon Principle, and actuated by Love: Such Fasting is a Death unto Sin, and a Life unto Righteousness; an Honour to thy Maker, and a Grace to thy Religion; a Service to thy Neighbour, and a Kindness to thy self. For if thou draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, and satisfy the afflicted Soul; then shall thy Sun rise in Obscurity, and thy Darkness be as the Noon-day: Then shall thy Light break forth as the Morning, and thine Health spring forth speedily.

Thine Health (I say) shall spring forth speedily! This single, but remarkable, Consideration of Health, should have a Charitable Influence upon such Strangers in this Place\*, as by the Help of a plentiful Fortune, are enabled to attend these Medicinal Waters, and may stand indebted to God for his repeated and miraculous Cures of their diseased and broken Constitutions.

The Orphans court you on the one hand, and the Lepers on the other: The Looks of the Hungry move your Compassion, and the Groans of the Sick demand your Assistance. Your Alms shall deliver you from Death, and suffer you not to come into Darkness. The Efficacy of your Prayers, and the Acceptance of your Fasting, depend upon the Openness of

Job iv. 10.

\* Bath.

your

your Hands ; and the Promise of Life and Immortality is founded and built up on Charity \*.

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I have now finished what I propos'd to insist upon at this Time ; and having rais'd my Discourse upon some Part of the Department of our Saviour and the Baptist, I think that I cannot more appositely conclude the Whole, than by connecting together Two Collects of our Church, wherein our Devotions are to be regulated by the prevailing Examples of these eminent Persons.

†† O Almighty God, by whose Providence thy Servant John Baptist was wonderfully born, and sent to prepare the Way of thy Son our Saviour, by Preaching of Repentance ; make us so to follow his Doctrine and holy Life, that we may truly repent according to his Preaching, and after his Example, constantly speak the Truth, boldly rebuke Vice, and patiently suffer for the Truth's Sake.

Be thou also farther pleas'd, O indulgent Lord and Redeemer, † who for our Sake didst fast forty Days and forty Nights, to give us Grace to use such Abstinence, that our Flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey

\* See Sermon XIX.

†† Collect for St. John Baptist,

† Collect for the first Sunday in Lent.



*The Different Conduct, &c.*

*thy godly Motions in Righteousness and true Holiness, to thy Honour and Glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, World without End. Amen.*

SERMON

# SERMON XXIII.

LUKE. vii. 33, 34, 35.

*John the Baptist came neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine; and ye say, He hath a Devil.*

*The Son of Man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous Man, and a Wine-bibber; a Friend of Publicans and Sinners.*

*But Wisdom is justified of all her Children.*

**T**HESE Words have already Sermon been the Subject of *Two* Dis-XXIII courses, and would now implore your Attention a *Third* Time.

At our last Meeting, I propos'd the *Seven* following Observations to your Consideration.

FIRST, The Lawfulness of an abstemious and reserv'd, as well as of a more free and open, Behaviour; and the proper Use to be made both of *Feasting* and *Penance*, at different Times, and upon different Occasions.

SECONDLY,

*The Different Conduct*

SECONDLY, The Necessity we may all lie under through the Course of our Lives, of *Indulging* or *Abstaining*, of attending *Festivals* or submitting to *Mortification*.

THIRDLY, The Difficulty of pleasing all People in these and such-like Instances of our common Deportment.

FOURTHLY, The Censures we must probably undergo in the lawful Use of our Christian Liberty.

FIFTHLY, The heightning Circumstances of Abuse which are here convey'd to us under the opprobrious Names of a *Gluttonous Man*, a *Wine-bibber*, and a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*.

SIXTHLY, The disingenuous and uncharitable Temper of those Persons who judge only by the outward Appearance, and are so positive and dogmatical in pronouncing *Indifferent Things*, Odious and Criminal.

SEVENTHLY, That the malicious Treatment which was design'd to destroy, is frequently the Occasion of supporting Truth; *Wisdom is justified of all her Children*.

I shall



I shall not now fatigue you with a Re-Sermon  
petition of what I lately deliver'd upon XXIII.  
the *Two* first of these general Heads, but  
fall directly upon the Discussion of the  
*Third*, viz.

The Difficulty of pleasing all People  
in such-like Instances of our common De-  
portment, as the Text ascribes to our  
*Saviour* and St. *John*.

Now this Difficulty doth commonly  
arise from a partial Love of our selves,  
from the Difference of human Sentiments,  
from a Weakness of Judgment, from the  
Contrariety of worldly Interest, from the  
various Customs of Living, and the In-  
dulgence of some proud Passions and per-  
verse Inclinations. For it is too usual,  
alas! for Men to judge of others by their  
own particular Humours, and to form  
their Notions of Right and Wrong, from  
a View of their own Practices; not only  
in Religion and Morality, but in the or-  
dinary Pastimes and Occupations of Life;  
in Looks and Gestures, in Eating and  
Drinking, in spending our Time and  
wearing of Apparel; we are generally  
Bigots and Humorists, and have some  
darling Tenets and favourite Customs  
which we regret to part with. The  
World is as tenacious of *Ceremonies* as of  
more *weighty Matters*; and Men, by long  
Exercise, so habituate themselves to Tri-  
fles, as to censure and upbraid Others for  
the Neglect of them. Thus their *Taste*  
must be the Standard, their *Dress* the  
most modish, their *Learning* the most  
use-

Sermon useful, their *Conversation* the most edifying, and their *Course of Life* the most healthy.

It is very surprizing for a Person of good Nature and Indifference, to see how some Men will grow old in Formalities; how they will be harden'd in Affection and Singularity, and stickle as hard for a few antick and ridiculous Customs, as for an *Article* of their *Creed*, or the Liberty of a Kingdom. The *Jew* measures Men's Religion by the Observance of *Sabbaths*, and the *Pharisee* by the Broadness of their *Phylacteries*. The *Separatist* is always canting about *Free Worship* and *Powerful Prayer*, and pitying those misguided People, who *stint the Spirit*, and *deaden the Devotion* by *car-nal Forms*. The *Enthusiast* talks of nothing but *New Visions* and *Revelations*, and looks contemptibly upon those ignorant Souls, whose darken'd Understandings are incapacitated for Truth, and whose vulgar Way of Thinking can attain to no fresh Discoveries.

In the Business of *Learning*, we run into the same Contrariety of Opinions, and continually displease one another by the different Course and Progress of our Studies. The *Fop* contemns the *mere Scholar*, for reading Books and neglecting Men; and the *Scholar*, on the contrary, thinks there is greater Advantage from the *Dead* than the *Living*, and that the Mind may be more cultivated and better employ'd in Retirement than Conversation.

tion. The *Antiquary* speaks contempti- Sermon  
bly of *Polite Learning*; and the *Modernist* XXIII  
exclaims as much against the Dulness of  
*Antiquity*. The *Philosopher* snarls at the  
Smoothness of the *Orator*, and the Flash  
of the *Poet*; whilst the *Poet* and the *Ora-*  
*tor* in their Turns sufficiently expose the  
Crabbedness of *Terms*, and the Jargon of  
Philosophy. Your *Systematical Men* make  
heavy Outcries against *Fathers* and *Coun-*  
*cils*, and are like to swoon at the volu-  
minous Tomes of St. *Chrysostome* and St.  
*Augustine*; but your Lovers of Primitive  
Christianity are for fetching Truth from  
the Fountain, and will allow nothing for  
Sterling, but what is stamp'd with *Anti-*  
*quity*.

In all these Instances, you see the Va-  
riety of Opinions, the Prevalence of Cu-  
stom, the Fondness of Self-love, and such  
Peculiarities in Taste and Fancy, that it  
is impossible, upon the Principles of Natu-  
ral Freedom, to conform with all Hu-  
mours, and to live in the World as Men,  
without disgusting Parties, or provoking  
Factions.

FOURTHLY, I proceed to the  
Censures we must probably undergo in  
the lawful Use of our *Christian Liberty*.  
For Calumny must be expected, and Op-  
pression borne, as long as Prejudice, En-  
vy, and Partiality remain in the World.  
When the Guilty are upbraided by the  
Practice of the Innocent, they will have  
a secret Consciousness of their own Faults,  
and



Sermon and hate the Monitors for the Sake of  
 XXIII their Monitions. *He that is not with the*  
 ~~~~~ Men of this World, *is against them*: He  
 who does not swim with the Tide, is
 suppos'd to stop the Current, and inter-
 rupt the Pleasure of Others. How angry
 are the Juvenile and Airy Part of Man-
 kind with the Gravity and Sedateness of
 Age? How Satyrical is the noisy and
 clamorous Prater upon the Silence and
 Modesty of the Meek? What Plots and
 Seditions does the busy Politician disco-
 ver in the Breast of his harmless and well-
 meaning Neighbour?

Thus Suspicious pass for Evidence,
 and Folly and Censure usurp the Throne
 of Judgment! From these little Dislikes,
 Men are led to think their Honour af-
 fronted, their Interest lessen'd, and their
 Persons undervalued: And from hence
 arises the Coldness of Friendship, and
 the Breach of Correspondence; the Fre-
 quency of Duels, and the Commission of
 Murder.

Happy then would it be for the Go-
 vernment of this World, and the Securi-
 ty of private Families, if Men would put
 on the *Bowels of Mercy*, Long-suffering,
 and Forbearance, and frankly give those
 Liberties to others, which they are so
 fond of taking themselves! Happy, if
 they would regard true Honour and Vir-
 tue, and slight the senseless Pretences of
 Form and Punctilio, and would be cha-
 ritable to Infirmities and Over-sights, and
 level

level their keenest Reflections against Sermon
Vice and Debauchery ! XXIII

But instead of this Christian Forbearance and brotherly Indulgence, Men run into greater Excesses of Censure, and grow more lavish and extravagant in their Speeches. For,

FIFTHLY, I observe the Heightening Circumstances of Abuse which is here convey'd to us, under the opprobrious Names of *a Devil, a Gluttonous Man, a Wine-bibber, a Friend to Publicans and Sinners.*

First, For the Name of *Devil*. This is the highest Infamy which could be thrown upon Man, and what (if believ'd) must render the Appearance of a Prophet odious, and prove his Doctrine an Imposture. Who would be seduc'd by his most implacable Enemy; or who would listen to the Instruction of Hell? Who would even bare the Company of a *Person possessed*, for fear of rebelling against Heaven, and incurring the Punishment of *Apostate Angels*? And yet this Compliment of *having a Devil* was very familiar with the *Pharisees*, and not only given to St. *John*, but to our Saviour also, upon several remarkable Occasions. If they could not resist the Force of a Miracle, they flew to the old Artifice of Calumny, and made Impudence out-face Reason, and Malice defy Omnipotence. If the *Blind* were cured, the *Lepers* healed, or the *Dead* raised; these several

F f

Operations

Sermon Operations were imputed to *Necromancy* XXIII and *Witchcraft*; and the common Language to the Agent was, *Thou art a Samaritan, and art mad: Thou hast a Devil,* John viii. 48. x. 20. Mar. iii. 22. *and castest out Devils by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils.* Therefore, Give God the Praise, O ye Sons and Daughters of Israel, for your Sight, your Limbs, and your Speech: For as for this Fellow, we know he is a Sinner.

Notwithstanding the Inconsistency and Ridiculousness of this Reproach (as appears by our Saviour's undeniable Answer to it;) yet if we consult the *Law of Moses*, and duly weigh the Punishment ordain'd to these infernal Arts, we shall find a more than common Malice in the Accusation: For *Thou shalt not suffer* (says that great Law-giver) *a Witch to live: Neither shall there be found among you any one that useth Divination, or an Observer of Times, or an Enchanter, or a Charmer, or a Consulter with familiar Spirits, or a Wizard, or a Necromancer. For all that do these Things are an Abomination unto the Lord: And because of these Abominations, the Lord thy God hath driven out the Nations from before thee.* But

Secondly, The same Malice, and sly Impeachment of our Saviour is couch'd under this Expression, *A Gluttonous Man, and a Wine-bibber*: For we are inform'd also from the Book of Deuteronomy, *That when a Father, or a Mother, accused a Son of Stubbornness or Disobedience, they were to bring him out unto the Elders of the City,* and

Deut. xxi. 20, 21.

and to say, *This our Son is a Glutton and a Drunkard; and then all the Men of the City should stone him with Stones, that he die.*

Sermon

XXIII



Now whoever considers the settled Design of the *Pharisees* to kill our Saviour, and the many Tricks and Subtilties they made use of to intangle him in his Speech, and the frequent Spies and Emissaries they imploy'd to catch him in the Breach of the *Law of Moses*, must conclude, That the Out-cry of *Gluttony and Drunkenness*, was a specious Objection to incense the Common People, and might be successfully manag'd, both to the Destruction of the Person of the great Preacher of *Righteousness*, and the stifling of the Growth and Efficacy of his Gospel.

Thirdly, The last heightening Circumstance of the *Pharisaical* Censure of our Saviour, was his Patronage and Protection of Debauchery; He was called a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*: A Friend indeed he was to those unhappy and misguided Persons, inasmuch as he was not sent to call the *Righteous*, but *Sinners to Repentance*, and did accordingly endeavour constantly, by the Influence of his Example, the Freedom of his Reproofs, the Wholesomeness of his Admonitions, and the Charity of his Miracles, to restore the *lost Sheep* to the Fold of their Heavenly Pastor. But then for a perverse Generation of Men to go on in Despite and Defiance to the Convictions of their own Mind, and to declare peremptorily that

Sermon
XXIII

Matt. xii.
14.

Christ was the Agent of Hell, and made Converts for the Prince of Darkness; this, this was such a heightening Aggravation of Censure, and such a daring Contempt of Mercies, as could *not be forgiven in this World, neither in the World to come.*

SIXTHLY, I observe the disingenuous and uncharitable Temper of those Persons, who, according to the Example of the *Pharisees*, judge only by the outward Appearance, and are positive and dogmatical in pronouncing *Indifferent Things*, Odious and Criminal.

This is the Way to destroy all human Conversation, and to stop the civil Method of Intercourse between Man and Man: Upon this libertine Principle, nothing but Jealousies and Suspicions would harbour in the Breast, nothing but Venom and Satire proceed from the Tongue. The most innocent Freedoms must be perverted, and *these Places* of civil Address and more polite Conversation, be accounted Brothels and Nuisances. Every Cast of the Eye will be term'd a Breach of Modesty, every pleasing Look misconstrued Wantonness, and every chearful Glass heightened into a Debauch.

Thus the Lady will be wounded in her most tender Character, and the Well-bred Gentleman must pass for a Fop or Buffoon. The Devotion of a Saint will go for Hypocrisy, and the Attendance on public Worship be accus'd for Form and Bigottry.

But

But who art thou, O Man, that judgest Sermon thy Brother? Who art thou that triest the XXIII Reins, and art privy to the Thoughts of thy Neighbour? The Knowledge of the Heart is not the Province of Mortals; and whoever pretends to it, will expose himself rather than reform others, and may pass for a Cynic or an Enthusiast, but must never pretend to be a Philosopher or a Christian.

SEVENTHLY, I beg leave to remark to you, That the Malicious Treatment which was design'd to *destroy*, is frequently the Occasion of *supporting* any Divine Doctrine; *Wisdom is justify'd of all her Children*. Miracles will maintain their Force upon candid and ingenuous Minds, and the Perverseness of the Proud cannot silence the Faith of the Humble. *The* John x. 16: *Sheep will know the Voice of their Shepherd*, and for their own Advantage follow him to the cooling Streams, and ever-living Pastures. *The Pharisees and Lawyers* perhaps may reject the Counsel of God against themselves, and from a false Opinion and Conceit of their own Learning, act counter to the *Wisdom from above*, and cut off the Means of their own Salvation: But the *Prophecies are fulfilled* by their Obstinacy, and the Poor and Ignorant reap the Benefit of what the Rich and Learned refuse. *Where now is the Wise? Where is the* 1 Cor. i. 24: *Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World?* Where are all your Human Plans of Perfection, and your Philosophic Schemes of Happiness? *God will not leave himself*

Sermon without Witness, nor his Gospel without
 XXIII its Advocates and Martyrs. He can
 crown his Agents with Success, by what-
 ever Methods and Assistances he pleases,

Psal. viii. 3. and out of the Mouths of very Babes and
 Sucklings ordain such Strength, as may still
 the Enemy and the Avenger. The Spirit of
 the Lord God is upon me (says Isaiah, in
 his prophetic Representation of the Offi-
 ces of Christ;) because the Lord hath a-
 nointed me to preach good Tidings to the
 Meek, and to comfort all them that mourn:

Is. lxi. 1, 2. He hath sent me to bind up the broken-heart-
 ed, to proclaim Liberty to Captives, and the
 Opening of the Prison to them that are bound.
 What then, though the Doctrine of the
 Cross may be a Stumbling-block to the Jew,
 and Foolishness to the Greeks? What,
 though Athens and Rome may unite against
 the Gospel? and their Philosophers op-
 pose, and their Emperors persecute the
 Church? Yet Weakness shall encounter
 with Strength, and Christian Folly con-
 found Secular Wisdom. *1 Cor. xix.* For God will de-
 25. stroy the Wisdom of the Wise, and will bring
 to nothing the Understanding of the Pru-
 dent: Because the Foolishness of God is wi-
 ser than Men, and the Weakness of God is
 stronger than Men.

Having thus explain'd and settled my
 General Observations from the Text, I
 shall proceed in the last Place to a Con-
 clusion of the Whole, in some short and
 obvious Inferences.

First, I infer from what has been said,
 That we should look principally to our

own

own Consciences : For then we shall have Sermon
a Rule to walk by, and the Example of **XXIII.**
our Saviour and St. John will influence and
encourage us in our Proceedings. *Beloved,* ^{2 Joh. iii.}

if our Heart condemn us not, then have we ^{21.}
Confidence towards God : Our Sincerity
will plead for our Justification, and our
good Intentions lay Claim to Acceptance.
It is not an Infirmary which ranks us with
Sinners, nor an unguarded Act which ren-
ders us obnoxious to Punishment ; but if
the internal Principle be sound and good,
and the Procedure regulated according to
Knowledge ; we may appear with Cou-
rage before an equitable Tribunal, and
expect a favourable Sentence from a mer-
ciful Judge. *Keep thy Servant, O Lord,* ^{Pf. xix. 13.}
from presumptuous Sins, lest they get the
Dominion over me : For their Demands are
exorbitant, and their Tyranny is insup-
portable : *These are they,* which pollute
the Conscience, *and defile the Man ;* but
the little Inadvertencies about *Eating*
and Drinking are no more the Subjects of
Censure, or Matters of Damnation, than
the *Tithing of Mint, Anise, and Cummin* is ^{Matt. xxiii.}
meritorious, when we omit the *weightier* ^{23.}
Matters of the Law, and live in an open
Violation of *Judgment, Mercy, and Faith.*

Secondly, I infer from the Proceedings
of our Saviour and St. John, That we are
not to regard the Representation of the
World, when our Actions are justifiable
and duly circumstantiated. For as long
as we have a *surer Word of Prophecy* to re-
sort to, and a more glorious *Light* to di-

Sermon rect us, why should we consult with partial Judges, or be disturb'd at the Ignorance and Malice of prejudic'd Men. The World and Christianity are originally at Variance; and the Enmity must be still on Foot, unless we can fall in *with God and Mammon*, and espouse the Interest of *Two contrary Masters*.

Thirdly then, as a farther Consequence from our whole Discourse, let us be cautious of courting *Popularity*. A good Name, indeed, is preferable to precious Ointment, and rather to be chosen than great Riches; But how can dastardly Actions, and sordid Compliances contribute to the Purchase of this inestimable Treasure? It is not the Majority of Admirers, or a Multitude of Voices which distinguishes Merit, or establishes Truth. *Wo be to you, when all Men speak well of you: For so did their Fathers of the false Prophets*. Take heed, therefore, that ye be not *false Prophets* for the Favour of Men, nor speak *smooth Things* for the Lucre of Preferment. *What Concord hath Christ with Belial, or Flattery with Truth? What Alliance hath the Frankness and Integrity of a Christian, with the Hypocrisy of a Pharisee or the Complaisance of a Courtier? If the Man of God is to cry aloud and spare not, and to lift up his Voice like a Trumpet; it is no great Matter, whether he be vers'd in Cringes and Nods, and can adjust the several Decorums of Visit and Ceremony. Plainness is no Disgrace to our Function, nor Simplicity*

Luke vi. 26.

1 Cor. vi.
75.

of Christ and the Baptist.

441

city any Blemish to our Christian Religion. *Do well, and good Men shall speak well of thee.* Execute Justice and love Mercy; Respect thy Neighbour, and reverence thy God; and then thou needest not be over-sollicitous about Fame and Honour; nor dismay'd at vulgar Rumors and Prejudices. Though thy Good should at present be evil-spoken of, and the Current of a strong Faction bear thee down; yet Providence in due Time may lift thee up, and thy Father who seeth in Secret, has promised to respect thy Services, and to Reward thee openly. Amen.

Sermon

XXIII

~~~~~

*Now to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, &c.*

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*The*

## *The Qualities of the MIND*

Preferr'd before

## *The Endowments of the BODY.*

I S A M. xvi. 7.

*But the Lord said unto Samuel, look not on his Countenance, or on the Height of his Stature ; because I have refused him : For the Lord seeth not as Man seeth ; for Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart.*

Sermon  
XXIV.

**T**HESE Words have a Relation to *Saul's* Successor, whom *Samuel*, in this Chapter, had positive Orders from God to anoint in his stead.

If we would know the Reason of this sudden Change in the Jewish Government, we must cast our Eye back into the foregoing Chapters, and there take a View of the Actions of *Saul*, as they are recorded by the Prophet *Samuel*.

Now upon a bare transient Glance into this History, we shall soon perceive, that *Saul* had transgressed the Commandment of  
the

*the Lord, and behav'd himself unseemly in* Sermon  
the Government of *Judea*; and that God, XXIV,  
for this Male-administration and Impie-  
ty, had determin'd to make the Remain-  
der of his Days troublesome and vexati-  
ous, and at the last to cut off the King-  
dom from his Posterity, and to bestow it  
upon a Person of better Accomplishments  
and greater Integrity.

Upon *Saul's* not executing the Com-  
mandment of God in the utter Destruction  
of *Agag* and the *Amalekites*, but spa-  
ring the best of the Booty, under a Pretence  
of making a more splendid and pompous  
*Sacrifice to the Lord*, *Samuel* was commis-  
sion'd to tell him, *That the Lord had rent* 1 S. m. xv.  
*the Kingdom of Israel from him that Day,* 28.  
*and had given it to a Neighbour of his, that*  
*was better than he.* And that the King  
might not think this a conditional Judg-  
ment, or such a Sentence as might be re-  
vok'd upon Humiliation and Repentance,  
the Prophet ratifies it by a solemn Appeal  
to the immutable Veracity of God; *The* ver. 29.  
*Strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent:*  
*For he is not a Man that he should repent.*

However *Samuel*, out of the Love  
which he bore to a Sovereign of his own  
Anointing, was prevail'd upon to mourn  
for the Misfortunes of *Saul*; and whilst  
he was under this Sorrow and Heaviness,  
God Almighty gave him fresh Informa-  
tion of his Intentions to transfer the King-  
dom, and bestow it upon one of *Jesse's*  
Sons: And tho' God design'd this Ho-  
nour for the youngest Son, he kept the Mat-

ter



Sermon ter a Secret from *Samuel*, and would not  
 XXIV. let him know the particular Person to be  
 ~~~~~~ advanc'd, till all the Brethren appear'd  
 before him.

Jesse, according to Appointment, presents his Family to the *Man of God*; and the first Person who made his Appearance, was *Eliab*, a Man very remarkable for the Comeliness of his *Visage*, as well as the Height of his *Stature*; and the Prophet being struck with these external Endowments, cried out, *Surely the Anointed of the Lord is before me*: But God having another Rule of measuring Persons than by their *Faces* or their *Strength*, gave *Samuel* a Reprimand for his hasty Judgment, in the Words of the Text.

Ch. xvi. 7.

Look not on his Countenance, or on the Height of his Stature, because I have refused him: For the Lord seeth not as Man seeth; for Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart.

From these Words, I shall propose these *Four* following Remarks to your serious and impartial Consideration.

FIRST, Some Things which we are not to be influenc'd by, in the conferring of Favours and Dignities upon Men; *Look not on his Countenance, or the Height of his Stature.*

SECONDLY, A Reason which is here assign'd for not being influenc'd in such Cases; *The Lord hath refused him.*

THIRD.

THIRDLY, The Grounds upon **XXIV.**
which this Reason is founded, taken
from the different Method of God's
judging of Things from that of
Man's judging of the same; *The*
Lord seeth not as Man seeth.

FOURTHLY, The Exemplifica-
tion of this Difference of Judgment
in two Instances; *Man looketh on the*
outward Appearance, but the Lord look-
eth on the Heart.

FIRST, From God's Commanding
Samuel not to look on the Countenance of
Eliab, or the Height of his Stature, we
may gather that there are some Things
which we are not to be influenc'd by, in
the conferring of Favours and Dignities
upon Men. These are many in general,
and relate to all such Advantages of *Birth*,
Fortune, and *Person*, as one Man may have
above another: But the Text has con-
fin'd me at present to the Consideration
of the latter, and that too under this
double Notion.

First, *The Graces of the Countenance.*

Secondly, *The Height of the Stature.*

First then, for the Countenance (which
is generally esteemed the Seat of Beauty,
and is wont to draw the Eyes, and com-
mand the Admiration of Spectators) we
must be so far from being determin'd by
the

Sermon the Charms and Attractives of it, that we
 XXIV. must reckon there are no real Excellencies
 in any external Graces and Endowments.

Jer. ix. 23.

Let not the Wise Man glory in his Wisdom, neither let the Mighty Man glory in his Might, let not the Rich Man glory in his Riches. Pride was not made for Dust and Ashes, nor can Glorifying suit with Want and Dependence. Beauty was not necessarily ordain'd for Empire, nor is Deformity barr'd from Inheritance.

Not that I would, by these Assertions, cast any Disgrace upon what Providence has fix'd a Mark of Distinction; or by any Means insinuate that an handsome Body is a Sign of *Reprobation*, or a beautiful Face any Obstacle to *Divine* or *Human* Favours: For upon this ill-natur'd Principle, Grace must always take her Residence with Deformity, and *David* himself must have been excluded from the *Kingdom of Israel*, as well as his Brother *Eliab*: For we read, that *he was ruddy, and of a beautiful Countenance, and a goodly Aspect.*

1 Sam. xvi.
 12.

By not looking on his Countenance, therefore, is not meant the Contempt of any Person purely upon the Proportion and *Exactness* of his Features, or the Charms and Beauties of his Complexion; but 'tis the Excessive Value and Distinction which is put upon these External Advantages, and the making of the Gifts of *Fortune* and *Nature* the principal Motives of our Preference of one Man above another, without

without paying a due Regard to better Sermon Qualifications and superior Merit.

XXIV.

Our Wise and Just Master is so far from taking this Course in the Distribution of his Favours, that we are told by St. Paul, *How he hath chosen the weak Things of the World to confound the Things which are Mighty, and foolish Things of the World to confound the Wise: And base Things of the World, and Things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and Things which are not, to bring to nought Things that are. He not only pitch'd upon David his Servant, and took him from the Sheep-folds, as he was following the Ewes great with young, that he might feed Jacob his People, and Israel his Inheritance: But he is oftentimes noted for exalting the Humble and Meek, for raising up the Poor out of the Dust, and lifting up the Beggar from the Dung-hill, to set them among Princes, and to make them inherit the Throne of Glory. He ordains a Cottage for a Step to a Crown, Humility for the Harbinger of Promotion, and Indigence itself to be the Parent of Nobility.*

1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

1 Sam. ii. 7, 8.

1 Sam. ii. 8.

As for any Form or Comeliness which one Creature may have above another, it is so far, upon that single Account, from moving the great Creator of all Things, and the sole Giver of all Perfection, in its Behalf, that he is oftentimes pleased to set the distinctive Marks of his Favour upon Deformity itself, and to those Members which we think less honourable, to bestow more abundant Honour, and to make

1 Cor. xii. 13.

Sermon make our uncomely Parts have more abundant Comeliness.



To that Part of the Creation, to whom God, next to the Angelic Order, has been most indulgent, and to whom the Poet, upon the supposal of their Charms, has given this flattering Character :

* ——— Καλλῶ

Αντ' ἀσπίδων ἀπασῶν,

Αντ' ἰγχείων ἀπάντων.

Νινῶ δὲ καὶ σίδηρον

Καὶ πῦρ, καλὴ τις ἔστα.

PROV. XXXI.
30.

To this celebrated Sex (I say) who are so much ador'd for the nice and delicate Composition of a little Flesh and Blood, the Wisest of Men (who had a sufficient Experience of their Charms) declares, That Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain, and that a Woman only who feareth the Lord, shall be praised.——But,

Secondly, The next Thing not to be regarded by Samuel in the Choice of a King, was the Height of his Stature : Which Expression may include under it these Two Particulars :

First, The Port and Talness of the Body, which, to Persons design'd for a public Station, may be apt to procure Reverence and Veneration, and to strike the Spectators with Awe and Trembling. This was an Advantage which Saul himself was eminent for ; insomuch, that

* ANACR. Od. 2. Εἰς Γυναικας.

when

when *Samuel* came to shew him to the *Israelites* some time after his Inauguration, **XXIV.** on, we read, *He was higher than any of the People, from the Shoulders and upwards,* 1 Sam. x. 23, 24. and there was none like him for Stature among all the People: And perhaps the same Prophet being now employ'd upon the like Errant, might so bear in Mind the Proceedings of the Almighty upon the last Occasion, as to think that he would act by the same Standard in the present Exigence.

Secondly, *Look not on his Stature*, is by the *Septuagint* render'd, *Μὴ ἐπιβλέψῃς εἰς τὴν ἕξιν μεγέθους αὐτοῦ*, which, together with the former Notion of his Talness according to our Translation, denotes the Bulk and Bigness of the Body, and by that Means conveys to us a Notion of the Strength of any Person, and his corporal Abilities to discharge a public Trust; to set upon an uneasy and vexatious Throne, and to hear the perpetual Complaints of a discontented People; to oppose the Encroachments of Neighbouring Nations, and to be in continual War for the Vindication of the Crown and its Prerogatives; to bear the Fatigues of the Camp, and settle the Debates and Consultations of the Cabinet; to execute Justice and Mercy to the injur'd Subject, and to send Relief to the Indigent and Oppressed: To do all this (I say) and perhaps a great deal more, must, in all human Probability, exercise the strongest Constitution, and, in the Expression of *Job*, require,

G g

That

Sermon That the Governour's *Bones should be as*
 XXIV. *strong Pieces of Brass, and his Flesh like*
Bars of Iron. Samuel who had, in effect,

Job xl. 18.

born this honourable Employment for many Years, and was now worn out with the Fatigue of *judging Israel*, might well suppose, that a sound and strong Constitution was necessary for the Throne, and the Make of the present Prince, and the Election of him by God's Approbation, might (as hinted before) confirm him in this Conjecture. But God, who can work with what Instruments he pleases, did now think it expedient to proceed in another Method, and to act by wiser Schemes and Maxims. He had more Respect to the Perfections of the *Mind* than the Bulk of the *Body*, and made Choice of a *Stripling* rather than a *Giant*.

— But,

SECONDLY, I proceed to treat of the Reason here alledg'd, why we are not to be govern'd by the *Face* or *Stature*, in conferring Favours upon Men: And that is, because God is pleas'd to reject those who in such Respects may seem well qualified in our Eyes; *I (says the Lord) have refused him.* The Direction was plain and positive, and the Denial too full and evident to be wrested to any favourable Construction. The Sanctity of the Prophet would not suffer him to break thro' Orders, nor the Injunction of his God allow of any Prevarication. Though we should not have the particular Guidance
 of

of the Spirit for ordering our Affairs and Sermon
 conferring our Favours upon others, nor **XXIV.**
 be determin'd in the Person we are to *promote unto Honour* by an exprefs Nomination
 from God; yet we cannot have a greater
 Proof of his Rejecting some Men, than
 by his not furnishing them with Abilities
 to discharge a public or a private Fun-
 ction. *Our God* is the Author of *Order,*
and not of Confusion, and hath made all
 Things in due *Measure, Weight, and Pro-*
portion. Every *Member* must keep its
 Place, and act for the Good of the Com-
 munity, or else Variance and Discord,
 Mutiny and Sedition will tear the *Body*
 to Pieces. If the *Feet* shall grow weary
 of their Station, and affect a Superiority,
 and usurp the Place of the *Head,* we may
 conclude the Government to be strangely
 confus'd, and that all the Members may
 suffer for it in the End.

God has an unlimited Jurisdiction over
 all the Beings of this World, and can
 place them in what Ranks and Stations
 he pleases. By the Right of Creation, he
 has the absolute Disposal of our Lives
 and Fortunes, and the Liberty to make
one Vessel unto Honour, and another unto
Dishonour. We are not to dispute his
 Prerogative, or reply against his Dispen-
 sations; not to urge any pretended Claims
 to the Prejudice of his Sovereignty, or
 enter any Protestations in Favour of our
Birth-right. We are not to tax his Pro-
 ceedings, or contradict the Laws which
 he has enacted. If he accepts *Abel* be-

Sermon fore *Cain*; loves *Jacob* and hates *Esau*;
 XXIV. sets aside *Eliab* and promotes *David*;

~~~~~ *What is that to thee?* May not he do  
 what he will with his own? Or is thine *Eye*  
 evil, because his is good? Who art thou, O  
 Man, that repliest against God? Who art  
 thou that presumest to arraign thy Sove-  
 reign, and censure the Regularity of his  
 Providence?

THIRDLY, I hasten to the Ground  
 upon which the Reason of God's reject-  
 ing *One*, and choosing another, is found-  
 ed: And this is taken from the different  
 Method of God's judging of Things,  
 from that of Man's judging of the same;  
*the Lord seeth not as Man seeth.* And far  
 be it from us to suppose, that absolute  
 Rectitude should take the Measures of  
 acting from human Blindness and Stupi-  
 dity: Far be it from us to impute any of  
 the Infirmities and Imperfections of our  
 Nature, to a Being who is transcendent  
 and infinite in all his Attributes. If God  
*saw* as we *see*, he would be short-sighted  
 and ignorant enough, and have none of  
 those Perfections and Endowments which  
 recommend him at present for the Ob-  
 ject of our Adoration. Whereas we know  
*but in part, and see through a Glass dark-*  
*ly*; He has Power to search, Wisdom to  
 discern, and Prudence to judge of the  
 most distant and contingent Events. We  
 may think foolishly that he is such an one as  
 ourselves, and impudently prescribe to him  
 from our scanty Notions and Concepti-  
 ons

1 Cor. xiii.  
 12.



ons of Things ; but a little Consideration will discover the Impiety of such Thoughts and Assertions ; a little Reflection will soon surprize and over-whelm us with the Incomprehensibleness of Omniscience, and withal demonstrate the Folly, and mortify the Presumption of conceited Mortals. *For my Thoughts are not your Thoughts, neither are your Ways my Ways, saith the Lord. Behold, as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, and the East is distant from the West ; so much superior is God's Knowledge to ours, and at such a vast Disproportion is Infinite from Finite. But if any one would wade farther into this mysterious Point, and should think these general Assertions not satisfactory enough, let him in the*

Is. lv. 3.

Ps. ciii. 12.

FOURTH Place, see the Exemplification of this Difference between God and Man's Judgment in *Two* Instances ; *Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart.*

First, *Man looketh on the outward Appearance* : Which Phrase may import these *Three* following Things.

FIRST, That the *outward Appearance* is the common Way by which Men are accustomed to judge of *Persons and Things.*

SECONDLY, That it is the only Way, in some Cases, by which we can judge of them.

G g 3

THIRD-



THIRDLY, That it is a Way which renders us liable to be frequently impos'd upon.

FIRST then, *Men's looking to the outward Appearance*, may have Respect to our common Practice of passing Judgment upon *Persons and Things*, as they outwardly seem to be.

We are generally taken and captivated at the first View, and let our Thoughts enter no farther into Matters than our Eye can see. We seldom give our selves the Trouble of Reasoning and Reflecting before we pass a definitive Sentence; but are dazzled with Shew and Out-side, and carried away with Noise and Splendor. A Laziness of Temper prevents all nice Enquiries, and a Love of Ease estranges us from sublime Thinking: A Fondness in Believing subjects us to Imposture, and a Rashness in Judgment makes us Slaves to Error.

Now in all these Cases where our Passions are apt to sway, and our Prejudices to mislead us, it is adviseable neither to throw too much Dirt upon corrupted Nature, nor to assume too much Knowledge to our selves. *It is not in Man that walketh to direct his Steps; nor in him that standeth to be secure from Falling.* Strength and Ability are from an invincible Hand; Dangers are foreseen, and Accidents prevented by a more intelligent Being. *Man may devise, but the Lord directeth: All the Ways*

JER. X. 23.

P. V. XVI. 2.  
9.

*Ways of a Man may be clean in his own Eyes; but the Lord weigheth the Spirit.* Sermon XXIV.

It may suffice, therefore, at present to remark to you, that all the Inconveniences which arise from the Judgment we frame from *outward Appearances*, and from the Actions consequent thereupon, are so far to be reckoned faulty and criminal, as we may be suppos'd not to make a right Use of our Faculties in the Discovery of Truth, and the Avoidance of Error; but in other Respects, where we cannot be proper Judges of Things, we must impute our Ignorance more to the Infirmities of our Nature, than to the Effects of our Choice.—And this brings me to the next Particular to be treated of, *viz.*

SECONDLY, That the *outward Appearance*, in some Cases, is the only Way, by which we can judge of *Persons* and *Things*. Our Knowledge is suppos'd to arise for the most part from our Senses, and the Judgment of the Understanding, is commonly from the Notices and Reports from *without*. The Way we have to judge of Body, is by its *Properties* and *Dimensions*; and of Men, by their *Actions*, *Speech*, and *Gestures*. If any Thing is lock'd up, or conceal'd *within*, we cannot penetrate into the Depth, or discover the hidden Mystery. The outward Act is what falls under our present Cognizance, and the Force of Evidence is what should influence and determine us. We must not pretend to



Sermon keep a Correspondence with invisible Spirits, to have Dispatches or Intimations from Heaven, or any new Lights or Revelations infus'd into our Minds by God. The *old* beaten *Paths* are what we are to tread in; and when we go out of the Road, we pretend to be wiser than we were design'd to be, and our Presumption infringes upon the Power, and breaks in upon the Prerogative of God.

THIRDLY, Our Judgment, according to *outward Appearance*, renders us liable to be frequently impos'd upon: And this is one of the chiefest Reasons, why mortal Man is fallible, and obnoxious to Error; but God, who proceeds upon a more certain Bottom, can neither be *deceived himself*, nor *deceive* others. We are not created with the Quickness and Perspicacy of Angels, and in Matters of *Report* and *Observation*, as well as of *Science* and *Argument*, we shall always fall short of Infallibility. The *outward Appearance* (you see) may oftentimes prove a false Light, and the Evidence of Sense misguide the Understanding. Thus Shadow passes for Substance, and a Counterfeit for true Coin: An Hypocrite goes for a Saint, and a Bravado for an Hero: A Smatterer in Science assumes the venerable Name of a Philosopher, and a confident Talker is taken for the wisest of Men. The Smiles of the Countenance are thought to be the true Tokens of the Sincerity of the Mind, and smooth Words,

and

and ambiguous Promises, the Earnest and Sermon  
Fore-runners of great Performances. XXIV.

These are some of the Errors which flow from our hasty Belief of Things as at first Sight they seem to be; and from hence we may infer the Reasonableness of St. John's Advice, *Judge not according to Appearance, but judge righteous Judgment:* <sup>John vii. 24.</sup>

That is, be not put off with every slight Colour of Probability, but wade by the Light of Reason, as far as you can, into the Depth and Justice of Things, and pass Sentence according to the Evidence of Truth and Equity. For want of this free and impartial Temper amongst the *Corinthians*, St. Paul assures us, that he suffered much, both in his personal Character, and in the Discharge of his Ministry. They objected to him, that he was *base κατὰ πρόσωπον*; and though they confess'd that there was something of *Weight and Power in his Letters*, yet they represented *his bodily Presence as weak, and his Speech contemptible*: And for this Reason, he might very justly, though upbraidingly, ask them, *Whether they look'd on Things only according to the outward Appearance*, and, like passionate and credulous Persons, pass'd their Judgment in a slight and superficial Manner?

You see now, my Brethren, how we accustom our selves to judge by the *outward Appearance*; how in some Cases we are under a Necessity of doing so; and in others, we are subject to innumerable Errors by such a Practice. The Reverse of

Sermon of all this, is the Judgment of an infalli-  
 XXIV. ble God, which, the Text tells us, is  
 made by contemplating the Heart; *the*  
*Lord looketh on the Heart.*

Now this Assertion may be considered  
*Two Ways;*

*First, As it relates to the great Wisdom*  
*of God in discerning Things.*

*Secondly, As it relates to those internal*  
*Qualifications which he perceives and*  
*regards in Men.*

*First, God's looking on the Heart,* argues his great Wisdom in discerning of Things. He is not like ignorant Men, to be impos'd upon by Appearance, but he surveys the *inward Parts*, and pierces into the Windings and Recesses of Conscience: He goes into the Depths and Secrets of all Council and Action; sees upon what Principles and Engagements we move, and by what Views and Considerations we steer our Lives. *Such Knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for us, and we cannot attain unto it!* But it is inherent in the Deity, and of absolute Necessity towards the Distribution of Rewards and Punishments in another State.

*Secondly, God's looking on the Heart,* may have Respect to those internal Qualifications which he perceives and regards in Men. The Heart is generally suppos'd to be the Seat of Virtue; and in the Scripture-sense of the Word, comprehends all those Gifts and Graces which  
 constitute



constitute a Religious Man: These are Sermon  
first conferr'd upon us by the Spirit of XXIV.  
God, and are to be cultivated and im-  
prov'd by our own Reason and Industry.

As we grow in Goodness, and increase  
towards the *Stature* of Perfection, we are  
sure of the Countenance and Approbation  
of God, and to experience his Favours  
and Gratuities in a more plentiful Manner.

He has but one Rule to judge by, and  
that is the *Heart*; and in this Respect  
every one of his Creatures may recom-  
mend himself to his Protection, and stand  
fair for Promotion. *Of a Truth God is*

*no Respector of Persons; but in every Nati-* Act. x. 34.

*on, he that feareth him, and worketh Righ-* 35.  
*teousness, is accepted with him.* He has  
*no Man's Parts or Beauty in Admiration*;  
but he will distribute his Favours accord-  
ing to the Uprightness and Integrity of  
our Lives, and distinguish our Persons by  
the Innocency and Unblameableness of  
our Consciences.

This may teach us to look after inter-  
nal Perfections, and to dress and beautify  
the Mind more than the Body; to put  
on the *Ornaments of a meek and quiet Spi-*  
*rit*, and not study to entice the Eyes, and  
captivate the Affections of our Admirers,  
by a tawdry and wanton Garb. The ut-  
most of our Art and Care will add but  
very little to our natural Composition;  
but half of the same Time and Diligence  
will give Abundance of Grace and Come-  
liness to the *inner Man*. The Make of  
our Bodies, and the Proportion of our  
Shapes

Sermon Shapes are not in our Power, and none of  
 XXIV. us *by taking Thought can add one Cubit to*  
*his Stature*; but the Forming of our Man-  
 ners, and the Regulation of our Lives are  
 personal Acts; the Assistance of Grace,  
 and the Improvement in Virtue, are the  
 standing Blessings of the Christian Cove-  
 nant.

Coll. for  
 Sund. 7th  
 after Trin.

*Lord of all Power and Might, who art*  
*the Author and Giver of all good Things;*  
*Graft in our Hearts the Love of thy*  
*Name, Increase in us true Religion,*  
*Nourish us with all Goodness, and of*  
*thy great Mercy keep us in the same,*  
*through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*The*

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THE  
*Unreasonableness of CENSURE.*

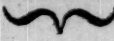
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MATT. vii. 3, 4, 5.

*And why beholdest thou the Mote that is in thy Brother's Eye, but considerest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye?*

*Or how wilt thou say to thy Brother, let me pull out the Mote out of thine Eye; and behold a Beam is in thine own Eye.*

*Thou Hypocrite, first cast out the Beam out of thine own Eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the Mote out of thy Brother's Eye.*

**T**HE Christian Religion, which Sermon  
so eminently triumphs in the XXV.  
Precepts of Love and Charity,   
is not only the most useful and important,  
but also the best-natur'd and most obli-  
ging Institution that ever appear'd in the  
World. Whatever four Doctrines some  
Men may have squeez'd and extracted  
from its Laws, and whatever Rigours  
and



Sermon  
XXV.

and Severities others may have presum'd to mingle with its Practice ; yet we are well assur'd, that *from the Beginning it was not so* ; that the original System, as it drop'd from the Mouth of the Divine Legislator, injoined no impracticable Duties, nor laid any such *Burdens upon the Shoulders of our Fore-fathers, as they were unable to bear*. Our modern *Pharisees* may have made their own Glosses and Comments upon the Gospel, and have wrested the *Scriptures* to the Destruction of themselves, and the Poisoning of their Hearers ; but the Primitive Institution is as Courteous as 'tis Ancient, and endeavours to make all its Members useful Neighbours, as well as devout Men ; It glories in such a Catalogue of social Virtues, as not only regards the Interest of the State, *and establishes the Monarch's Throne in Righteousness* ; but sweetens the Dispositions of Mankind, and secures the Property of every individual Subject.

Nay, lest any Bitterness should rest upon a regenerate Mind, or any Suspicions rankle in the Breast of a *Disciple*, our Saviour has descended to the minutest Circumstances of Life, and the remotest Passages that may occasion Disturbance : That the Christian Common-wealth may be regularly governed, and the Church preserved *without Spot or Wrinkle*, he has condemned all hasty Judgment and rash Censures, all unnecessary prying into other Men's Business, and undue Reflections upon their Conduct and Actions.

Wby

*The Unreasonableness of Censure.* 463

*Why beholdest thou the Mote that is in thy Brother's Eye, but considerest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy Brother, let me pull out the Mote out of thine Eye; and behold, a Beam in thine own Eye. Thou Hypocrite, first cast out the Beam out of thine own Eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the Mote out of thy Brother's Eye.*

From the Words we may observe the following Things.

FIRST, The great Proneness of Mankind to pry out and expose the least Faults and Imperfections in others; which is intimated to us, by *Beholding a Mote in our Brother's Eye.*

SECONDLY, The usual Custom of these captious Persons, of neglecting or concealing greater Faults in themselves; *There is a Beam in thine own Eye.*

THIRDLY, That a greater Degree of Guilt in ourselves, commonly puts us upon Censuring and Exposing others; *There being but a Mote in our Brother's Eye, and a Beam in our own.*

FOURTHLY, The Inconsistency of this Proceeding of guilty Persons in their Pretences to Censure and Reformation; *How wilt thou say to thy Brother, let me pull out the Mote out of*



*The Unreasonableness of Censure.*

*of thine Eye; and behold a Beam in  
thine own Eye.*

FIFTHLY, The true Method of reforming ourselves first, that we may be duly qualified for the Reformation of others; *Thou Hypocrite, first cast out the Beam out of thine own Eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the Mote out of thy Brother's Eye.*

FIRST, I observe from the Words of the Text, the great Proneness of Mankind to pry out and expose the least Faults and Imperfections in others, which is intimated to us, *by beholding a Mote in our Brother's Eye.*

We live in such a busy and meddling Age, and amongst such a perverse and fretful Generation of Men, that nothing can escape the Search of the Curious, and the Censure of the Satyrical. Scandal is the Sauce of our grand Entertainments, and the Life of our modish *Assemblies*: It is the Wit of our *Fine Gentleman*, and the Accomplishment of the *Softer Sex*. Like the *Athenians* of old, *we spend our Time in nothing else, but either in telling or hearing some new Thing.* Inquisitiveness employs our Thoughts, and Impertinence our Tongues: When Intelligence fails, Invention furnishes out Materials, and Malice propagates the Defamation. For that Sort of People who are most accustomed to carry Stories and disperse  
*Evil*



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*Evil Reports*, do very seldom fail of making their own Additions and Amendments, and rendering their Scandal more modish and fashionable by some graceful and peculiar Turns of their own Fancy; especially, if by this means, they have any Hopes of tickling the Ears and procuring the Favour of their Hearers, or of casting a greater Slur upon the Persons they reproach and calumniate. Sermon XXV.

O! *What shall be done unto thee, O thou false Tongue? What shall be thy Reward, O thou uncharitable and injurious Neighbour? Wo is me that I am constrained to dwell with Mesech, and to have my Habitation among the Tents of Kedar. The Liars and Calumniators are ready for Battle, and the Enemies of Peace are always shooting out their Darts, even bitter Words.*

One would think that in this State of Mixture and Imperfection, some Allowances might be made by frail Mortals, to one another's Infirmities and Errors; but we see every Blemish expos'd, and every Miscarriage exaggerated. The less the Provocation, the higher the Resentment; the more excusable the Person, the more malicious the Reflection.

*Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas.* Juv. Sat. 2.

Those Things which Prudence should conceal, and Charity forgive; Ill-nature will be eager to uncover, and Envy to proclaim upon the House-top: What Ignorance might suggest to be Subject of Par-

H h

don,

Sermon don, and Inadvertency would plead for a XXV. favourable Construction of ; Censure will  
 ~~~~~ heighten into an Act of Presumption, and a Zealot's Prosecution arraign for Treason.

Let a Man once *give his Mind to Folly and Madness*, and be guilty of a single Frolick in his whole Life : And where is the Repentance that can atone for his Crime ? Where is the Satisfaction that can stop the Mouth of his Enemies ? The *Blot* must always remain in his *Escutcheon*, and the Guilt on his Conscience : His Name shall be gall'd with Satyrical *Mementoes*, and the Infamy descend to his harmless Posterity.

What, though a Man's Faults be few, and his Virtues numerous ? the one shall lose their Lustre by their Nearness to the other ; and, like *Black Spots* upon a *White Garment*, be more conspicuous to the Eye, and sink deeper into the Minds of Spectators. Nay, it is a great Chance, if Shame don't live when Virtue is extinct ; if a Miscarriage be not rehears'd with Pleasure, when good Deeds are sunk into Oblivion.

So *extremely* severe are Men to *mark what is done amiss* ! So industriously bent upon the Ruin of each other's good Name and Reputation in the World ! Every Noise is Thunder, and every Flash is Lightning : The least Drops must swell the Ocean ; and a *Cloud no bigger than a Man's Hand*, be immediately raised into a Storm and a Tempest. Let a Person
 have

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have but so little a Thing as a *Mote in Sermon his Eye*, and he shall be represented as *XXV. stark-blind*, and that Bleimish and Imperfection shall be more talk'd of and pointed at, than all his other Graces and Perfections, be they never so eminent and conspicuous.

SECONDLY, I am to expose the extreme Partiality of captious Persons in *neglecting or concealing* greater Faults in themselves, than they reprimand in others; *They consider not the Beam in their own Eye.*

Let a Man be never so exact and rigid against others, he is generally fond and indulgent enough to himself. The babbling Tongue preys abroad, and all the Ravage is carried into the Neighbour's Territories. The Concealment of our own Faults is as studied and artful, as the Publication of other Men's would be thought useful and meritorious. Self-love blinds the Eyes of a Sinner, and the Fear of a Disgrace stifles the Confession of his Crimes. Those who impeach others, expect Pardon themselves; and those who detect Criminals, pretend to the Merit of a Reward. To talk of Guilt to a Saint, or to retort an Accusation upon an Hypocrite, may possibly hinder the Office of *Pimps*, and frustrate the goodly Schemes of *Reformation*.

Your Censorious Persons are willing to be reputed better than they are, to be endowed with all those excellent Qualities which are requisite for Monitors.

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Sermon Flattery sooths their Pride, and a Panegyrick upon their own Excellencies, is always grateful to their Ears; but Plain-dealing is their Aversion, and a Recrimination of Facts is disgustful to their Holiness.

With what Contempt and Indignation did the proud *Pharisees* ask our Saviour upon his free Discourse of *Intellectual Blindness*, *Whether they were blind also?* Those who taught others, were unwilling to be ignorant themselves; those who preach'd against *Theft*, seem'd to scorn the Guilt of *Stealing*; and those who abhor'd *Idols*, would gladly conceal their own *Commission of Sacrilege*.

THIRDLY, I would beg leave farther to represent to you, that a greater Degree of Guilt in ourselves, doth most frequently put us upon this Censuring of others.

It is the general Artifice of wicked Men, to cast a Blemish upon others, that their suppos'd Excellencies may be advanced from a Comparison, and their dim Light appear by the Eclipse of brighter Luminaries. The Devil, who is the grand Parent of Sin, has taken his Name from his Practice, and is in nothing more infamously remarkable than in his *false Accusations* and villainous Aspersions of the Brethren. His Servants in this World walk exactly in the Steps of their old Master, and treat the several Virtues of their innocent Neighbours with the same Calum-

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Calumnies and Reflections, that he did the Uprightness and Integrity of *Job*.

Sermon

XXV.

We have the liveliest Example of this in the fore-mentioned Example of the *Scribes and Pharisees*, those *blind Guides*, and rotten *Casuits* in the *Jewish Church*: For these stiff and rigid Observers of the *Law*, could sit in *Moses's Chair*, and contradict their great Legillator to his Face; could be tenacious of a *Tradition*, and disrespectful to the *written Word*; could be nice and punctual in the *Tything* of *Mint, Anise, and Cummin*, but loose and heedless in *observing the weightier Matters of Mercy, Judgment, and Truth*: They could find Uncleanneſs in unwashen Hands, but none in polluted Hearts; could make Distinctions in their Garbs, but not in their Manners; could be splendid *without*, and rotten *within*; see a *Mote*, and over-look a *Beam*; strain at a *Gnat*, and swallow a *Camel*.

If we carry our Observations wider, we shall find the same crafty Principle still working in the *Children of Disobedience*. What is more common, than for an old *Strumpet* with Tears in her Eyes, to lament the Debauchery of the Age? How will an *Usurer* shake his Head at Extortion, and a *Miser* cant against Covetousness? *Gracchus* shall harangue the *Senate* upon Sedition, when himself is one of the most factious and turbulent Persons in the *Empire*. *Cataline* shall extol Property, and commence the People's Advocate, when he swells with his own arbitrary

Sermon
 XXV. contrary Schemes, and would raise himself by the Blood of his Fellow-Citizens. Old sturdy *Cato* was not without proud and selfish Views in his Encomiums upon *Liberty*; and every modern *Republican* hopes to find his private Accounts by his *Invectives* against *Slavish Obedience* and *Regal Government*.

Such, you see, are our boasted Patriots, our pretended Reformers, and our supercilious Instructors of others! Their own Wickedness proves oftentimes a Spur to their Ambition, and a Plague to their Neighbours. For Modesty is inseparable from Virtue; but Impudence is the Retainer to Vice, and the Bane of Society. Your *Murmurers* and *Complainers* most commonly walk after their own Lusts, speaking Evil of those Things which they know not, or should not reprehend: But what they know naturally as brute Beasts; in those things they corrupt themselves. These raging Waves of the Sea foam out their own Shame, accustoming their Hands to throw Dirt, and their Mouths to speak great swelling Words of Vanity.

Jud. x.

By their Fruits, ye shall know them: Their intemperate Zeal raises a Mistrust of their Sincerity, and their Delight in Censure is the truest Indication of their personal Guilt. For a good Man thinks himself obliged by his Religion to hide the Imperfections of others, and to be armed with that extensive Charity, which thinketh no Evil, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things: But it is the Wicked who

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who are noisy, outrageous, and revenge-Sermon
ful; the Wicked, who are troublesome XXV.
in their Complaints, busy in their Prose-
cutions, and sanguinary in their Punish-
ments.

But notwithstanding the current Pra-
ctice of a vicious World, the Corruption
of human Nature, and the Hypocrisy of
Deceivers; I doubt not, but to make it
appear in the

FOURTH Place, That such like
censorious Proceedings of guilty Persons,
are not only unwarrantable in themselves,
but inconsistent also with the Designs of
those who practise them.

Now the Truth of this Observation
will appear, by considering,

*First, That such Reprehensions upbraid
the Censurer.*

*Secondly, They provoke the Person cen-
sured to Reprisals.*

*Thirdly, They subject the Censurer to
the more severe Judgment of God.*

First then, Reprehensions from guilty
Persons upbraid those that give them;
*How canst thou say to thy Brother, let me
pull the Mote from thine Eye? How canst
thou be so stupid and ignorant, to think
that Formality should sanctify thy Acti-
ons, and a Pretence to Gravity impose
upon the World? What Weight can
thy Admonitions bring with them, or*

sermon what Effect thy Decrees produce, when
 XXV. Guilt is in thy Face, and a Lie on thy
 ~~~~~ Tongue? O Romantic Judge! O conceited Pretender! Alas, alas! 'tis thy  
 Virtue must awe, and not thy Scarlet. 'Tis  
 thy Life must convince, as well as thy  
 Precepts; and thy Example operate,  
 Rom. ii. 1. where the Law is a dead Letter. *Therefore, thou art inexcusable, O Man, whoso-  
 ever thou art that judgest: For wherein  
 thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself;  
 for thou that judgest, dost the same, or worse  
 Things.*

*Secondly,* Such Reprehensions from guilty Persons provoke the Sufferer to Repisals.

Nothing is so stubborn and untractable as Vice; nothing so uneasy to be reformed, and so malicious to the Reformer. A Pretence to Wisdom makes us insensible of Error, and a Notion of Liberty impatient of Controul. The Pride of our corrupted Nature cannot well bear a Rebuke, and a Fondness for our own Excellencies unqualifies us for Repentance.

A Reformer then of others should *cut off all Occasion of Offence* from himself; or else he will rouse the most terrible Enemies, and must expect nothing but Recrimination and Revenge from an exasperated World. His own Security should oblige him to Silence, and common Prudence to Caution and Wariness in Acting. Candor and Charity should *stop the Mouth of his Accusers*, and the Practice of Favour and Indulgence to other Men, plead for

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for the like Treatment and Civilities to Sermon  
them. XXV.

Upon this Principle, Forbearance and Amnesty may be settled in the World, and the several Offices of good Neighbourhood and Civility reciprocally exchanged: But if guilty Persons shall take undue Liberties in Censuring, and think their own Actions to be screen'd, whilst others of less Consequence are expos'd and animadverted upon; the World will presently be blown into a Flame, and the several Pretences of *Honour, Reputation, and Interest*, will push *Men of like Passions*, into Duellings, Law-Suits, and Murders.

*Thirdly*, The last Restraint of Censure, is the severe Judgment of God upon censorious Persons.

This Argument, as I humbly conceive, will appear to be principally intended by our Saviour, if we consider the pressing Advice which is here given by him in the Beginning of this *Seventh Chapter* of *St. Matthew's Gospel*, and the Foundation there laid for the cautious Proceedings in the Text. *Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with the Judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: And with what Measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.* Mat. vii. 1.

Your Rashness is offensive to the Forbearance of God, and the Rules of Equity call for a Retaliation: Your Curiosity subjects you to the stricter Enquiries of Heaven, and your Severity shall be repaid by the same Proportion of Divine Justice. *Wo to thee that spoilest, and thou wast* Is. xxxiii. 7.



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Sermon *wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously,*  
XXV. *and they dealt not treacherously with thee:*

~~~~~ *When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an End to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.*

Then accustom not yourselves to do, as you are unwilling to be done by, nor arbitrarily inflict upon others, what you are
 1 Sam. ii. 3. *averse to suffer in your own Persons. Talk no more so exceeding proudly, let not Arrogancy come out of your Mouth: For the Lord is a God of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed.* He is an unprejudic'd Inspector into the Conduct and Manners of Men, and will take the Cause of the injur'd and oppress'd to his own peculiar Determination. The Method of his Proceedings with Criminals is very lively represented, by the Example of that King in the Gospel, who punished the Barbarity of one of his Debtors, for casting his
 Matt. xviii. 27. 28. *Fellow-servant into Prison for an hundred Pence,* when he had before so frankly and generously forgiven him ten thousand Talents: And the Moral of this Parable ought always to lie uppermost in our Minds, and to deter us from Barbarity
 Jer. 32, 33. *and Injustice. O thou wicked Servant, I forgave thee all that Debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldst not thou have had Compassion on thy Fellow-servant, even as I had Pity on thee? Take him therefore from my Presence, and deliver him to the Tormentors, till he shall pay all that is due unto me: Let him learn Mercy in a Goal,*
 and

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and Humanity from Fetters. For his Sermon
own Cruelty has cancell'd my gracious XXV.
Intentions towards him, and a fresh Pro-
vocation has subjected him to my highest
Displeasure.

FIFTHLY, I proceed to the true
Method of reforming ourselves in the first
Place, that we may be duly qualified for
the Reformation of others; *Thou Hypo-
crite, first cast out the Beam out of thine own
Eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast
out the Mote from thy Brother's Eye.*

Thou Hypocrite! What Affection canst
thou bear to Virtue, or what Aversion to
Vice; the *Beam* is so plain in *thine own
Eye*, that every Spectator throws out the
Sarcasm, and choakes thee with the Im-
putation of Injustice. *Thou whited Se-
pulchre!* *Thou formal Out-side!* Sittest^{Acts xxiii.}
*thou to judge me after the Law, and com-^{3.}
mandest me to be smitten contrary to the
Law?* Doth not every one see thy Pre-
judice, and ridicule thy Partiality? Do
not thine own Actions disqualify thee for
the *Bench*, and should not thy repeated
Enormities more fitly place thee at the
Bar with Criminals?

Then *first cast out the Beam from thine
own Eye*: Let Reformation begin at home,
and the Seat of Justice be erected in
thine own Conscience. Thy personal
Crimes may blind thee in thy Proceedings,
and put a fatal Bias upon all thy Acti-
ons: But when these grosser Obstacles are
remov'd, thou mayst see clearly to cast out
the

Sermon the Mote from thy Brother's Eye. The XXV. Prospect will be open and serene, and the minutest Passages come regularly under thy Cognizance: Thy own Life will give Credit to thy Decrees, and a conformable Practice recommend thy Principles. Nay, thy strictest Scrutinies will demonstrate thy Abhorrence of Villany, the Rigor of thy Proceedings will argue a Respect to Justice, and every Sentence pronounc'd tend to the Strength and Support of our Civil Constitution.

Now, God grant to all of us, in our respective Stations and Employments, to be merciful in our Tempers, candid in our Judgments, upright in our Dealings, decent in our Expressions, and condescending in our Deportment.

God grant that such as move in any higher Sphere, may not defeat the good Intentions of the Law by a bad Example, nor stifle the Efficacy of their Reproofs by a vicious Life, or harden Sinners in the Error of their Ways by any Severity of their Proceedings: But that all who are put in Authority, may act for the Honour of their Sovereign, and the Good of his Kingdoms, by a true and indifferent Administration of Justice, to the Punishment of Wickedness and Vice, and to the Maintenance of God's true Religion and Virtue. Amen, Amen.

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F I N I S.



A SHORT
CHARACTER

Of the Right Reverend Father in God,

Dr. *GEORGE HOOPER*,

Late BISHOP of *Bath and Wells*.

TAKEN FROM

Mr. *Mist's Journal*, of *October 21, 1727*.

Ille quidem plenus annis abiit, plenus virtutibus, plenus honoribus, illis etiam quas recusavit: Nobis tamen querendus ac desiderandus est, ut exemplar aevi prioris.
Plin. Epist. Lib. 2.



*Ergo Quintilium perpetuus sopor
Urget? Cui pudor, & justitiæ soror
Incorrupta fides, nudaque veritas,
Quando ullum invenient parem?*

Hor. Carm. Lib. I. Od. 24.

Mr. MIST,

ACCORDING to the Character you have in the World, it might be expected that you should have done Justice to the Memory of a *late Prelate*, and not barely have told us that Bishop *Hooper* was dead, without leading us into some of the most beautiful Scenes of his *Life* and *Actions*.

As this Prelate was the last of Queen *Anne's* Promotion, and the most remarkable for his Affection to the Church of *England*; so I must tell my Friend *Mist*, that his Character would have made a shining Figure in his Journals, and atoned for the Tedioufness of twenty little Stories concerning the Bribery and Corruption of a poultry Corporation.

What

The CHARACTER of

What you have omitted, shall be my Province to attempt; not at *Length*, but in *Miniature*; with a Design only of preserving Gratitude in the Minds of those he has oblig'd, and of exciting Imitation in such as shall succeed him in the Episcopal Office.

As the Generality of Readers are desirous to know something of the *Birth, Life, and Preferments* of a great Man; so I shall briefly inform them, that Dr. *Hooper* was born in *Worcestershire*, educated in *Westminster-School*, elected from thence a *Student* of *Christ-Church*, and proceeded regularly through all his Degrees in the *University of Oxford*. He was successively Chaplain to Bishop *Morley*, and Archbishop *Sheldon*, and presented by the latter, to the Rectory of *Lambeth*, and the *Precentorship* of *Exeter*. Upon the Marriage of the Princess *Mary* with the Prince of *Orange*, he was appointed one of her Chaplains, and went with her into *Holland*; and after the *Revolution*, was promoted, by her Interest,

Bishop HOOPER.

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Interest, to the Deanery of *Canterbury*. Whilst he was in this Post, he was unanimously chosen *Prolocutor* of the *Lower House* of *Convocation*, and became a zealous Defender of the Rights and Privileges of the *English Presbyters*. Upon the Accession of Queen *Anne* to the Throne, he was first advanc'd to the Bishoprick of *St. Asaph*, and afterwards translated to the See of *Bath and Wells*. Here it was, that he was received with the universal Applause both of the Clergy and Laity, and by the future Conduct of his Life, verified that saying of his Master *Busby*, That *Dr. Hooper was the best Scholar, the finest Gentleman, and would make the compleatest Bishop, that ever was educated in Westminster-School*.

Under this *threefold* Notion, I shall beg Leave to give you an imperfect Draught of this eminent *Prelate*, and to enlarge so far upon his Virtues, as the Compass of your Paper will allow me.

As to his Learning, it was not smattering and superficial, but solid

and universal : And no Man can doubt of this, who had ever the Happiness of his private Conversation, or the Pleasure of perusing his publick Writings. His Talents were so great in every distinct Part of Knowledge, that the Masters of each Faculty have thought their Profession to be the Bishop's peculiar Study. The *Lawyer* might suppose him bred to the *Bar*, and conversant in nothing but *Statutes* and *Reports*. The *Casuis*t might think his whole Time spent in *Canonists* and *Schoolmen* ; and the *Divine*, in *Fathers* and *Councils*. The *Antiquary* might tie him down to *Medals* and *Charters* ; and the *Linguist* fancy him always poring upon *Lexicons*, or else the several *Eastern* Languages could not be so familiar to him as *Latin* and *Greek*. The *Philosopher* found no Science out of the Reach of his comprehensive Genius ; nor the Masters of polite Literature, any Graces in the *Classics* which had escaped his Observance.

Yet in all these several Attainments, his surprizing Excellency was, that

that the Variety of Learning did not distract his Thoughts, nor the Intensity of Study sour the facetiousness of his Humour. He so temper'd the Crabbedness of the *Mathematicks* with the Politeness of the *Orator*, the Legends of the *Rabins* with the Fidelity of the *Fathers*, and the Occurrences of *modern History* with the Transactions of *Antiquity*, that he was as delightful in his Conversation, and as entertaining in his Friendships, as he was profound in his Knowledge, and ornamental in his Life.

The next Posture I am to view Bishop *Hooper* in, is as a *Gentleman*. And here his Accomplishments were so great, as not only to excel those of his own Profession, but to be a Match for such as had made Conversation and Ceremony their sole and ultimate Study. Little would one have thought that the Travels of this great Man were confin'd to a clownish Part of the *Low Countries*, when he knew the Manners of the whole World, and had transcrib'd into his own Practice whatever was really valuable

The CHARACTER of
in the most *polite Courts* of *Europe*.

It is observable, that much Study makes Men pettish and morose; that a recluse Life is an Impediment to Conversation; and that Learning it self is imperious and dogmatical: But, in the Prelate before us, all these Acquisitions had the quite contrary Effects. His Study was to promote good Manners; his Retirement, to make a more glorious Appearance; and his Learning, to propagate Affability and Condescension.

The private Course of his Life would force any one to confess, that he was far from affecting Popularity, or doing any Thing for Noise and Ostentation; but his Appearance was so venerable, his Conversation so endearing, and his Demeanor so uncommon, as to render him the most *popular* and noted Prelate of his Order.

But in the midst of these Civilities and Accomplishments, it is still remarkable, that the Gravity of the *Bishop* kept the Ascendant of the *Gentleman*; and that his Principles were too stiff to bend to any Company.

His

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His Zeal and Integrity were inviolable, and Truth was never lost in a Crowd of Words: His *Sincerity* was no Sufferer by his *Complaisance*; nor was the *Courtier* too hard for the *Christian*.

Such a learned and accomplish'd Person must be acceptable to any Diocese; and we have the less Reason to wonder at his growing Character, if we consider the wise Rules and uncommon Maxims by which he conducted his Life.

He look'd upon himself as *marry'd* to his Diocese; and, notwithstanding his numerous Acquaintance, and extended Friendships in other Parts of the Kingdom, he confined his Preferments to his *own Children*, the residing Presbyters of his proper District. *Nepotism* had no Share in his Favours, and Relations were kept at a Distance. The laborious Clergyman would find himself surpriz'd into a Preferment, whilst he was sweating at his Duty, and combating with Schism. The modest and humble Man would be *dignify'd* in his Obscurity,

scurity, without the Fatigue of Attendance, or the Formality of a Petition. The Care of his Parish was the best Recommendation of a Pastor to this vigilant Prelate, and the Continuance in his Duty the most obliging Requit that could be made him. Where the Service was great, and the Congregation numerous, some Marks of Distinction were certainly plac'd, and the Minister was seasonably advanc'd, to secure an higher Reverence to his Person, and a kinder Acceptance of his Labours.

His frequent Complaint was, the want of more Preferments for a numerous, an indigent, and a deserving Clergy : And, instead of stocking his *Cathedral* with Relations, and filling the Pulpit with Party and Faction, he broke the Neck of the strongest Combinations, and left nothing but *sound Doctrine* in his Diocese, and the Blessing of Peace and Unanimity amongst his Clergy.

Pray God we may always continue in the same Posture that he left us, and may have no Reason to make
that

that Complaint upon the Decease of our spiritual Father, which *Pliny* did upon the Loss of his Friend; *Amisi vitæ meæ Rectorem, amisi Ducem, & vereor ne posthac negligentius vivam.*

I know (Mr. *Mist*) the Compass of your Paper, or else I could add a thousand Things about the intellectual Capacities of this great Prelate, who, like *Moses*, had no *Dimness* in his Understanding, no *Abatement of his natural Force*, and youthful Wit, at the uncommon Period of almost 90 Years.

It is probable that some other Person, who is under greater Obligations to his Lordship than my self, and better acquainted with his private and publick Designs, may, in due Time, give a larger Account both of his natural and acquired Endowments. I have confined my Remarks to my own Knowledge, and made my Observations upon his moral and relative Perfections, and looked back with Comfort and Pleasure upon the fixed and stated Rules of his Government in his Diocese: For here we all partook

The CHARACTER, &c.

partook of his Goodness, his Clemency, his Candor, and paternal Indulgence. Every one had the Favour of a *Son*, the Access of an *Equal*, and the Reception of a *Friend*. No angry Looks did intimidate the Petitioner, no tedious Formalities protract Business, nor any imperious Officers insult the Clergy.

Heu Pietas ! Heu prisca Fides !

As long as Religion shall lift up her Head, and Learning retain a Sense of Gratitude, *the Memory* of this *Great* and *Good* Man *shall be blessed*, and nothing shall be able to hate him, but Vice; nothing to traduce his Character, but Envy; and nothing to insult his Ashes, but Faction.

This is what I thought fit to communicate to you upon this Subject, and if you shall esteem it worthy of the Publick, and honour it with a Place in your Paper, you will oblige many of this Diocese, and none more than

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Somersetshire,
Oct. 11, 1727.

Your old Friend,

And Correspondent,

ORTHODOXUS.

